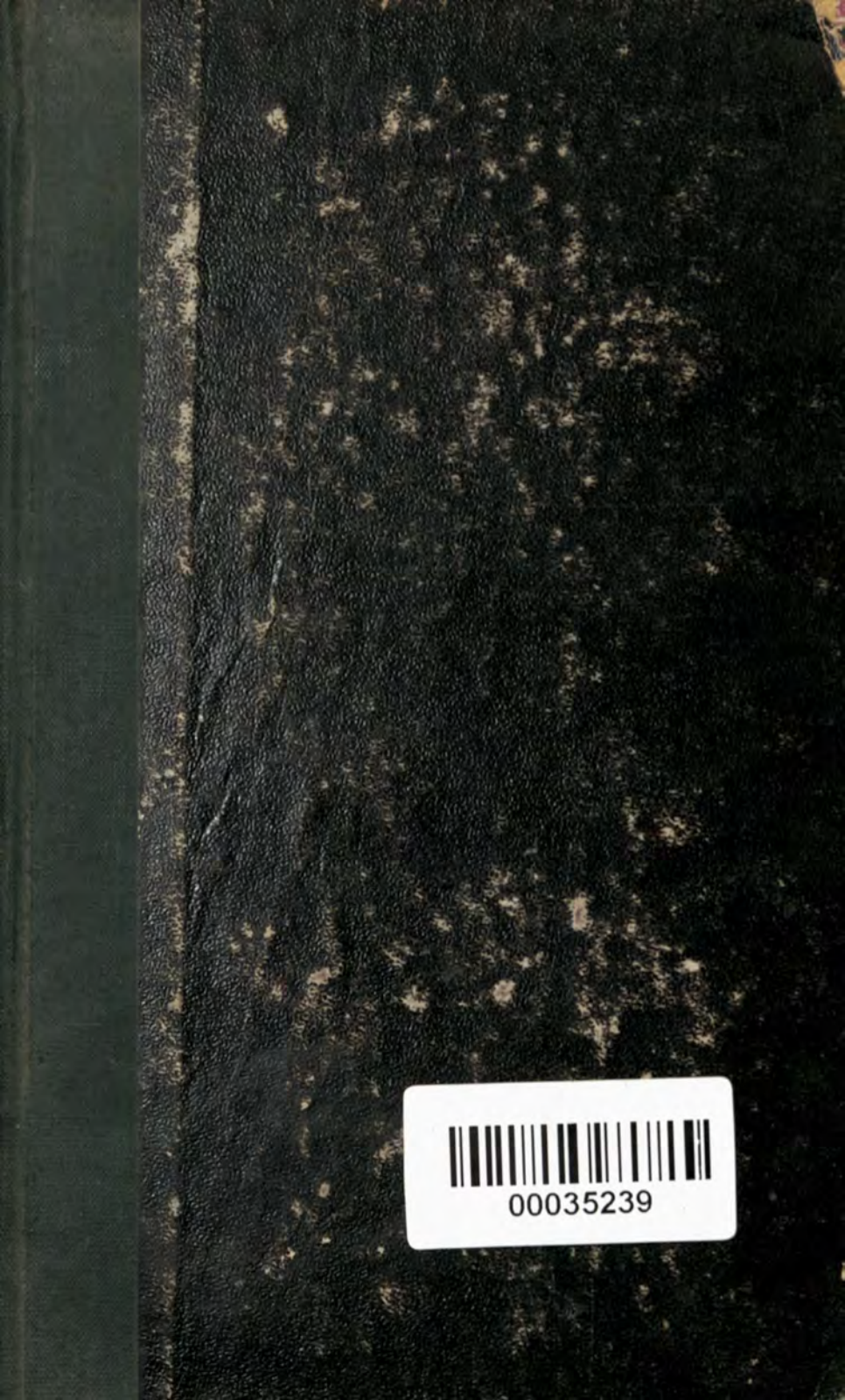
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HISTORY OF THE LIFE

OF

ARTHUR

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

FROM THE FRENCH OF M. BRIALMONT

CAPTAIN ON THE STAFF OF THE BELGIAN ARMY.

WITH EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS

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BY THE

REV. G. R. GLEIG, M.A.

CHAPLAIN-GENERAL TO THE FORCES AND PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, & ROBERTS.
1858

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TO

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

THE FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHY

OF

ONE WHO WAS IN HIS LIFE-TIME THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS OF HER SUBJECTS:

TRANSLATED FROM A FOREIGN LANGUAGE, AND BROUGHT THEREBY WITHIN THE REACH OF THE GREAT MASS OF HER PEOPLE:

IS

WITH HER MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION

DEDICATED

BY

HER MAJESTY'S VERY HUMBLE AND DEVOTED SUBJECT AND SERVANT

G. R. GLEIG.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE work of which I have been induced to offer to my countrymen an English version, seems to me to be one of the most remarkable of its kind which has appeared in modern times. It is the history of the greatest of our English military commanders, by a foreign officer, undertaken in a spirit of extraordinary fairness, and executed in more than its military details with singular ability.

M. Brialmont writes of the Duke of Wellington as if the public and private character of that illustrious man had been with him a life study. Traits of individuality, which those only might be expected to understand who had the privilege of being admitted to at least some share in the Duke's confidence, are seized as if by the power of intuition, and depicted justly. The singleness of purpose which lay at the root of every action — the devotion to duty which constituted the moving principle of a long life — the unbending truthfulness which showed itself in the most trifling incidents of social intercourse not less conspicuously than in the important affairs of camps and cabinets—the generosity which was as ready to assume the blame in case of failure as to attribute the merit of success to the

exertions of others; all these qualities which were so remarkably interwoven into the moral being of the Duke of Wellington, are set forth with a frankness which cannot be too much commended. Neither is the author backward to acknowledge the intellectual superiority of his hero. He recognises fully the extent of the difficulties with which the Duke was beset, in the ignorance (so far as military operations were concerned) of his own government, and in the prejudices and antipathies of the Peninsular nations, whose battles he was called upon to fight. And if here and there, in his zeal for the glory of its commander, he appears to do but scant justice to the British army, no one who reads the Duke's despatches and accepts them literally as they are written, will be surprised at the circumstance. The truth is, that in communicating with those at a distance about both his officers and his men, the Duke was apt to express himself in language which, to say the least, exaggerated a good deal his own sentiments concerning them. I do not mean to say that the British army represented, forty-five years ago, any more than it does now, the cream of English society in all its gradations. Whatever the officers knew of the duties and requirements of their profession, they had learned entirely in the field. And the men, recruited by voluntary enlistment, represented in too many instances the idle and dissolute of their class. But to speak of them as if they had been habitually prone to mutiny, or even to insubordination, is to do them a great wrong. They were guilty—I mean the men—of shocking excesses as often as a town was carried by

assault; I have never heard or read of troops who in like circumstances were not in this respect equally guilty; and to keep them from plundering when the bonds of discipline had been loosened, either by a victory or in a retreat, was not always an easy matter. But their conduct in camp and quarters, on the line of march, and during temporary halts, was on every occasion such as to command the respect and win the confidence of the peaceable inhabitants. Compare the condition of Portugal, as she lay under the heel of Massena's army, with that of the south of France, when a British force occupied it from the Bidassoa to the Garonne, and then say, whether, upon the whole, the British soldier deserves the sweeping censure which in the following pages is on more than one occasion cast upon him.

In like manner I must demur to the assumption that the British soldier is constitutionally either less energetic in the attack, or more incapable of sustaining fatigue than the soldier of any other nation. He belongs to an army which has not heretofore depended for its subsistence, and which, I trust, never will depend, upon marauding and a system of requisitions. His movements must therefore be regulated, so as to coincide with the placement of his depôts. He cannot be pushed on, even in pursuit of a beaten enemy, with such rapidity as shall carry him beyond the reach of his supplies. But he who has recorded the march of the light division to Salamanca, as well as the movement of Wellington's troops from Oropesa by Arzobispo to Deleytoza, is surely chargeable with something like inconsistency when he speaks of the British soldier as

less capable of sustained exertion, when the need arises, than the French. And, as to his impetuosity in the attack, the battles of Salamanca and Vittoria furnish proofs of that quality not less conclusive than are afforded by the combats of Busaco, Talavera, and Waterloo, of his obstinacy in holding a defensive position.

But while I enter this protest against a sentence which M. Brialmont would have much modified, had he seen the British soldier under the great Duke in the field, I freely admit that the Peninsular army became "the best mounted machine that the world ever saw," solely through the skill and indefatigable exertions of its commander. He took it in hand destitute of every thing which is required to render an armed force effective; he laid it down in such a state "that he felt he could do any thing and go anywhere with it." Its staff, its commissariat, its siege-apparatus, its bridge equipment, its means of transport, its intelligence department, its knowledge of outpost and other duties, were all of his creation. He landed on the shores of the Mondego at the head of a certain number of battalions, of squadrons, and of guns; he moulded them by degrees into an army of which the organisation could not be surpassed. The discipline which he established and maintained was strict without being cruel, and he speaks, in consequence, of outbreaks, which in other armies would have scarcely attracted attention at all, as if they had been heinous crimes. But this goes only to prove that his standard of perfection had been fixed so high, that even he, with all his untiring energy and decision, could not succeed in reaching it.

M. Brialmont may rest assured that the British army which separated under the walls of Toulouse, was in every way worthy of the chief who commanded it; and a moment's reflection will convince him that higher praise cannot be bestowed upon a General, than that his troops, formed under his own eye, are able to accomplish any service on which he may think fit to employ them.

Again, the place which M. Brialmont assigns to the Duke as a military commander, viz.: the second in the world, may or may not, in general estimation, be the right one. Undoubtedly the field of his European warfare was less extensive and varied than that of Napoleon. He performed no single march so brilliant perhaps as the passage of the Alps, in 1800, nor can any of his campaigns be compared in point of rapidity of aggressive movement, and perfect success, with that of Jena. But if his triumphs were less imposing than some of those achieved by his great rival, the mistakes into which he fell were at once more rare, and less serious. He never owed his escape from absolute destruction to the indolence of an opponent, as Napoleon did at Aspern. He never lost an army, as the army of Russia perished, long before it reached Moscow, through the improvidence of its leader. Circumstances compelled him, no doubt, during the greater part of his European career, to wage a war which was defensive, even in its movements of attack. The means at his disposal were, from first to last, inconsiderable, when compared with those which Napoleon could command; and his ingenuity was taxed to the full as much in combating the ignorance and timidity of the Govern-

ment which he served, as in baffling the designs of the enemy. But if uniform success in every thing which is undertaken be any proof of military talent of the highest order; if patience under present difficulties, and forethought in providing against the accidents of the future; if the faculty to arrange, and the ability to execute vast plans; if quickness to detect, and promptitude to take advantage of the blunders of an enemy, are fair criterions by which to try the comparative merits of rival generals, then the justice of the award, which assigns the first place to Napoleon, and only the second to Wellington, may be called in question. The one wielded at pleasure the might of an enormous empire, drawing without stint upon its resources, both for men and *matériel*. The disaster of to-day could with him be repaired by the victory of to-morrow; there was no one to call in question the wisdom of his resolves or the fitness of their execution. The other acted under the control of a government, not timid only, but ignorant; which was at once sordid and extravagant, and itself dependent from day to day for existence on the breath of popular opinion. The loss of a few thousand lives, in a great victory, exposed both it and its general to censure; the loss of a single battle, no matter in what emergency fought, would have led to the recall of the latter, and ended the war with disgrace. How could the most enterprising warrior whom the world has ever seen, do more, under such circumstances, than Wellington effected? Napoleon dazzled the looker-on by the brilliancy of his exploits, and confounded the minds of men with the magnitude of the results

to which they led. Wellington held his own under every disadvantage of inferior numbers, and an ill-assorted command. When the hearts of all men, both in England and elsewhere, failed them, his remained firm. He was cautious because the means of acting boldly were long denied to him; yet his very caution was the inspiration of genius. In his lines, before Lisbon, Wellington was, in truth, a greater general than Napoleon on the banks of the Danube or the Borodino.

It will be seen at once that the chief merit of M. Brialmont's work consists in the skill and knowledge with which he describes the Duke's military operations. With his narratives of these I have not presumed to interfere; they seem to me, upon the whole, to be so ably drawn up, and the criticisms which accompany them are so candid, that I should have been loth to change one word which he has written, had I even felt that, as a translator, I was justified in doing so. But the case is different in regard to the Duke's career both in early and later life. It is not only not surprising to find that here M. Brialmont falls short, but the marvel is how, with the opportunities which alone were open to him, he should have said so much and said it so well. I have endeavoured, as far as circumstances will allow, to supply what he was unable to give; and that no blame may attach to him for my mistakes, if unfortunately I commit them, I have placed whatever is original in the following pages, within brackets:— [ ]

Of the English authorities to whom M. Brialmont refers I have not made much use. It was very natural that he,—a comparative stranger to our language and

literature, should consult and depend upon biographical sketches to which we, in this country, affix no great value. His foreign authorities stand in another category. Whether right or wrong in their general views, they reflect to us the opinions of men who look at the matter under consideration through a medium different from our own. I have therefore considered myself bound to retain the quotations which he has made, and to refer, at the bottom of the page, to the works from which they are taken. But I have not overloaded my notes with discussions on points of strategy, which, however interesting they may be to students of the art of war, have but little connection with the Memoirs of the Duke of Wellington, properly so called.

Finally, I must guard myself against being supposed to agree in every opinion, political as well as military, which is expressed by my Author. His speculations on the rise and progress of the English Empire in the East, are, like those of continental writers generally, inaccurate. They attribute to the Company designs which it never entertained, and charge as faults upon the Imperial government results which it would have averted, had it been able to do so. But all this the English reader will fully understand; and if he separate the real from the ideal in the theories of a stranger, he will not fail to collect from them, even where they are mistaken, an increase of valuable knowledge.

With respect to myself — to the motives which induced me to undertake the office of a translator, and to the facilities which have been afforded me in the execution of my task — I have but few words to say.

There was a time when the thought of becoming, sooner or later, the biographer of the great Duke "haunted me like a passion." I even went so far as to open the subject to his Grace himself in his lifetime. But the proposal was met with so much of wisdom, mixed with great kindness, that I could not do otherwise than abandon the idea on the instant. It was impossible, indeed, to fence with arguments which turned upon a generous respect for the reputation of others, or to doubt the fitness of postponing to some future age revelations which could not be made in the present, except at the cost of much private suffering, and no small amount of public inconvenience.

The subsequent appearance in print of the Duke's despatches may be said, indeed, to have so far modified this decision, that they make the world very fully acquainted with his career as a soldier and a diplomatist. And if the laudable purpose of his son and successor be persevered in, the materials will be arranged and prepared for the perfect accomplishment of a great task, by some biographer yet unborn. But more than this it would be idle in the present generation to expect. There are confidences in public as well as in private life, particularly among those to whom the destinies of empires have been intrusted, which must continue such — long after both the objects and the subjects of them have passed from the stage. To violate these prematurely could lead only to heart-burnings and confusion.

Though alive to the importance of these truths, I have found it difficult to get entirely rid of the dreams of

other days. And when M. Brialmont's meritorious history appeared, these came back upon me in full force. It was proposed to me, while so brooding, that I should translate the book, and endeavour at the same time to add to its interest. I hesitated for many reasons, and among others, for these: that the work of translation is one in which I have had no experience; and that I was at a loss how at once to do justice to the original, and to effect even partially the objects suggested. But the persuasions of some of the late Duke's friends, and still more, the great kindness of the present Duke in promising all the assistance which a just regard to the principle above referred to would sanction, overcame my scruples, and I set myself to my task, diffident, indeed, of my own ability to do it justice, but with the earnestness which profound veneration for the truthful character of him about whom I was going to write might be expected to awaken.

There are many persons still living who enjoyed a far larger share of the Duke's confidence than I, and whose opportunities of conversing with him were much more ample. Indeed it would be an act of unpardonable presumption were I to pretend that he ever honoured me with more than a kindly and generous acquaintance. But to have been his guest for days and nights together —to have listened to his words of wisdom in the discussion of questions, both of the past and of what was then the present time—to have observed his habits within the domestic circle, and interchanged ideas with him on many subjects—these are occurrences in the life of a

common man on which he must always look back with satisfaction. And, in my own case, they entitle me, at all events, to say that the picture which I have assisted in drawing could not have been completed without some personal knowledge of the original.

It has been comparatively easy, with M. Brialmont's lucid pages before me, to trace the military history of the Duke of Wellington from its commencement to its close. In attempting to narrate what may be called his Grace's civil and political life, our excellent author affords me little or no assistance. Moreover, this part of my work is one which, let me take what pains with it I may, must in the nature of things be very imperfectly executed. For the time has not yet come for telling the whole truth, in regard to many matters of deep public interest, and I am especially restrained as to those about which it is to be expected that my readers will most desire to be accurately informed. All, therefore, which I can attempt to do is to show how, and to what extent, the Duke was mixed up in the general progress of affairs, and to give such a sketch of his habits of thinking and acting in private life as shall convey to the minds of the rising generation, and to those of generations yet to come, some idea of the man whose name they will find inscribed on every page of one of the most important volumes of history.

But to do even this, as it ought to be done, I must work slowly. And, therefore, seeing that the history of the Duke of Wellington divides itself naturally into two portions, I content myself for the present with

describing chiefly in the words of M. Brialmont his military career alone. What remains to be said of him as a statesman and a member of society shall be said as soon as time and reflection enable me to digest to my own satisfaction the matter which I have been able to collect.

Royal Hospital, Chelsea,
June, 1858.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

FRENCH literature cannot boast of any complete biography of the Duke of Wellington. That illustrious man, who played so conspicuous a part in the events of the nineteenth century, is unknown in France except by brief notices, generally incorrect, and sometimes expressed in a spirit of mortifying depreciation.

To supply this defect, it might perhaps have sufficed to translate one or other of the biographies published in England. But, however admirable some of these may be — so far as regards style, and the general management of their subject — the military student, and, indeed, every impartial reader, finds a good deal that is unsatisfactory in them. He desires a more careful investigation than they supply into facts which are either disputed or imperfectly established; and is not quite pleased with the tone of blind enthusiasm which is universally perceptible in their estimate of the merits of their hero.

In him who undertakes to write the history of such a man as the Duke of Wellington, there is required not only a competent knowledge of military affairs, but such a spirit of impartiality as shall lift him above the influence both of personal feeling and national prejudice. Now, to this latter essential qualification, it is

hardly to be expected that the writers either of France or of England will lay claim. No man can pretend to be an absolutely fair judge in questions which affect the glory of his own country. Few would desire, however strong their sense of justice, to become the eulogists of such as by their triumphs have eclipsed it.

A consideration of these facts leads to the conclusion that an original work, compiled by one who claims kindred neither with the victors nor with the vanquished, has a better chance of being well received than a translation of the very ablest of the English biographies. Besides, there occur in these biographies such gaps and inaccuracies as must either force the translator into frequent deviations from his original, or else compel him to overlay his text with frequent notes and corrections. The Life of Wellington, in three volumes, by Maxwell, for example, however popular it may be, is, in the opinion of competent English authorities, full of defects. It enters too much into detail upon secondary points, and is too laconic in its explanation of facts of real importance. The criticisms hazarded in it are always feeble, sometimes worthless. In a word, the author lacks method and lucidity in the recital of military operations, and, stopping at the year 1815, gives no account whatever of some of the most important epochs in the life of the great Duke. The same blank is perceptible in the Memoirs by Sherer — in the Notices by Clerke and Elliot — and in the works of Jackson and Scott. M. Vieusseux, in a little work of considerable merit, but too fragmentary, published in 1841 in "Knight's Store of Knowledge," limits himself in like manner to a

notice of the Wars of Wellington. M'Farlane, Stocqueler, and an anonymous writer in the "Times" are almost the only authors who have followed the Duke throughout the whole of his career. Their works, commendable in more than one respect, express excellent opinions on political events, but they throw comparatively little light upon the military transactions in which the Duke was the prime mover. It is evident, indeed, that they are all wanting in the special qualifications which are required in him who sits in judgment on the merits of a plan of campaign. In this respect Vieusseux and Captain Moyle Sherer, both of whom served in the Peninsular War, enjoyed an advantage which adds much to the value of their works.

One fault, common to all the biographies of which we are speaking, is this, that they do not sufficiently separate the deeds upon which the glory of Wellington rests, from the mistakes which ignorance or envy has attributed to him. They fail to convey a sufficiently distinct idea of the character of that illustrious man, of his public virtues, of his private qualities, of the motives on which he acted, and the resources of every kind which he displayed, as a general, as a statesman, and as a man of business.

In order that the same reproach may not be cast upon our biography, we have fixed, with the most rigorous exactitude, the amount of praise or blame which attaches to Wellington for each separate act of his political and military life. This proceeding has enabled us to refute the unjust or prejudiced criticisms of certain authors, who do not entertain for the mission

of the historian the respect which is due to it. Let us hope that we have, by these means, accomplished the object, which every man who writes for the instruction of others ought to propose to himself: *Truth in the statement of facts, and impartiality in the deliverance of judgments.*

The conclusions at which we arrive are suggested entirely by official documents, and by the testimony of men who have played an honourable part in the events which they describe.

Among these latter we would cite, for the wars of India, Nicholls, Malcolm, Harris, and the Marquis of Wellesley; — for the wars of the Peninsula, Napier, Foy, Thiebault, Le Noble, Jomini, Vieusseux, the Marquis of Londonderry, Leith Hay, Jones, Suchet, Marmont, Jourdan, and the Count Toreno. And for the campaign of 1815 — Napoleon, Gneisenau, Jomini, De Vaudoncourt, Heymes, Müffling, Gerard, Ney, Berton, Grouchy, the Count d'Erlon, and Reille.

The narratives of these distinguished men, who looked at facts from opposite camps and different points of view, enable us to eliminate the truth from the midst of contradictory assertions, and to assign to each particular transaction the rank and importance which it ought to possess. But valuable as such testimonies are, we have examined with still greater success the letters of the generals and statesmen who are mixed up with the political events which we have undertaken to describe. A great number of these letters have been brought to light by Colonel Napier, in his remarkable History of the Peninsular War; and by Major Belmas,

in his journals of sieges, compiled from documents in the War Depôt of France. By far the most important papers were, however, rendered accessible at a later date. These are the Wellington Despatches, in twelve large volumes, published in London in 1835; and the "Memoirs of King Joseph," in ten volumes, which have only just appeared. These two most valuable collections, of which the one completes and balances the other, are, in point of fact, sufficient to render clear all the memorable exploits which were accomplished in the Peninsula between 1808 and 1814. They have enabled us to point out many circumstances heretofore unknown in the life of Wellington, and to rectify numerous errors which the absence of documents so detailed caused our predecessors to commit.

In casting an eye over the work which we now submit to the public, it will be seen that we deviate widely from the course which the English biographers have pursued. Instead of describing events in the order in which they occurred, and accompanying them with the reflections to which they naturally give rise, we have divided our work into two parts, the one historical the other purely critical.

In the first, we confine ourselves to the statement of facts. In the second, we pass judgment upon the man who is mixed up as the principal actor with them.

Finally, that we might not unnecessarily extend our narrative, we have suppressed all that is merely accessory; in other words, all that does not conduce to a right appreciation of the life and labours of Wellington. For the same reason we have omitted from the text,

and given in the shape of notes, many of the critical remarks and details of operations which soldiers alone will read with interest.

In the second part we have devoted ourselves to a careful study of the character of Wellington — a study based upon the information which the previous chapters supply. It is not enough to describe exactly, every thing which an illustrious man has done throughout the course of his life; it is more becoming to judge of his actions in the mass, and to draw from them conclusions which make us familiar with the nature of his talents, the importance of his services, and the salient points in his character,—in a word, with all the elements which are necessary towards forming an opinion for posterity.

So far as this matter is concerned, there is in all the biographies of Wellington an important void, which Earl de Grey has endeavoured to supply by the publication of his "Characteristics." This work, which is extremely interesting, may, however, be described rather as a *résumé* of the correspondence of the English General, than as a study of his character or of the value and importance of his exploits.

M. Jules Morel has pushed the spirit of inquiry further in his biographical essay, written with as much of skill as of impartiality. This work, nevertheless, abounds in mistakes and important omissions, which may be attributed, without doubt, to the haste with which it was compiled; and, above all, to the author's obvious inability to do justice to the merits of Wellington as a military commander. Now, it is exactly Wellington's

claim to the rank of a great military commander which demands to be established with especial care, — first, because, in estimating the reputation of the man, this claim must be considered before all others; and next, because, for this very reason, it is obstinately disputed by his rivals and enemies.

Wellington has had detractors innumerable, and implacable enemies. He is represented, above all, in France, as a general of narrow views, timid to excess, incapable of directing great operations, fit only for defensive warfare, and owing much more to fortune than to military talent. Evident exaggerations these, which might for a moment pervert opinion, but can leave no traces upon history. They resemble the moths which at night fly about the candles, and end by burning their own wings and falling to the ground. In our appreciation of the life and labours of the Duke of Wellington, we shall have more than one fall of this kind to record. Animosity and disparagement shall find no echo in these pages; a desire to avenge an illustrious victim shall not cause us to commit the mistakes of an irreflective enthusiasm. Between certain French authors, wild in their criticisms, and most of the English writers, not less wild in their praise, we shall preserve the just mean, which will be the neutral ground of truth and impartiality.

INTRODUCTION.

FROM the day on which Washington fell asleep amid the regrets of his fellow-countrymen and the reverence of all nations, leaving, to use the expression of a great poet, the United States as a trophy on his battle-field, no man's death has caused such deep emotion, or called forth more unanimous tokens of sorrow, than that of Arthur, first Duke of Wellington.

No sooner were the tidings of that mournful event spread through England and the Continent, than the humblest citizen of Great Britain, equally with the most elevated member of the social hierarchy, put on, of his own accord, the garb of mourning, and paid a just tribute of praise to a life pure, glorious, and nobly accomplished. The Queen herself, by an official mark of gratitude and veneration, showed her willingness to be associated with that touching unanimity of public grief, when, opening the session of Parliament on the 11th of November, she said, "My lords and gentlemen, I cannot meet you again for the first time after a dissolution, without expressing my sorrow, in which, I am sure, you will participate, that your deliberations can no longer be aided by the counsels of that illustrious man, whose great achievements have exalted the name of

England, and in whose loyalty and patriotism the interests of my throne have always found an unfailing support. I rely, with confidence, on your desire to join with me in taking such steps as may mark your sense of the irreparable loss which the country has sustained, by the death of Arthur, Duke of Wellington."

The Cabinet decided that the remains of England's greatest general should rest beside those of her greatest admiral; and Parliament, the faithful interpreter of the national will, voted, to cover the expenses of the funeral, the sum of 100,000*l.*

On the 18th of November, the day fixed for the ceremony, London presented a spectacle at once touching and sad. The houses covered with black hangings, the closed shops, industry and commerce suspended, hundreds of thousands of citizens collected from all parts of the land, the Royal Family, the ambassadors of all the powers, deputations from foreign armies, the Houses of Commons and of Lords, the Courts of Law, the Public Offices, the army, the people, all the grandeur and all the pomp of England met together in one funereal procession, to testify to the magnitude of the loss which the country had sustained. Nor was it only in the old metropolis that these royal honours were paid to the departed. Throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, that day was marked by the same unanimity of sentiment, by the same tokens of sorrow. An idle demonstration, a mere act of complaisance or of flattery, would not have assumed a like imposing character. To the dead we render only justice; and the English people, in giving to Wellington so gorgeous a funeral, believed

no more than that they were discharging a mere debt of gratitude and admiration.

If he had been but a celebrated warrior, these mighty honours would not have been awarded to him. His glory and his popularity turned upon this, that he was at once a great captain and a great citizen,—redoubtable upon the field of battle, humble and submissive before the law. Ambition never tempted him to undertake aught which had not for its object the glory or the interest of his country. He was the personification, the noblest and the most complete, of good sense, and of English firmness and patriotism. Although, after the king, he was the foremost man within the realm, and though his services had given to him an influence and authority without example, he was simple in his manners, free from pride and sullenness, kind, affectionate, jealous to preserve the reputation of an honest man, and full of deference for the majesty of the sovereign. It was a principle with him, to show that a citizen, however great he may be, ought to honour himself by showing to others an example of respect for the laws, and of obedience to the national will. His chief merit is, that he was able to raise himself, in spite of the obstacles which the manners and institutions of his country present, to the exercise of military power; and to have been, throughout fifty years, the first general of a free people and the arbiter of their destinies, without any one being able to reproach him with the commission of a single illegal or despotic act.

To this unalterable respect for right, so rare among conquerors, he joined another virtue more rare and

more precious still,—respect for human life, and a generous pity for the victims of war. Amid the moving scenes of a battle-field, he was able to preserve, uninjured, that sensibility of heart and spirit which is blunted, in the long run, among men the most delicately organised, when they find themselves often confronted with scenes of death and destruction. The fall of his brave companions drew tears from his eyes, and it can be said of him that he never occasioned wanton injury, nor caused a soldier to be executed, except from stern necessity. His name, doubly illustrious for the qualities of the intellect and the heart, recalls the memory only of honourable acts, of real services, of glorious reminiscences; and this it is which will make him live for ever in the memories of mankind.

The gravest nations sometimes permit themselves to be carried away by genius, enterprising or extravagant, which strikes upon their imagination by its eccentricities; but they award esteem and solid admiration to those alone whose acts, irreproachable in regard to justice and the dignity of human nature, are marked with the double character of public utility and moral grandeur.

Alexander, who stole the empire of the world,—Cæsar, whom the same ambition conducted to his ruin, — and Napoleon, who, in order to give thrones to his family, bent so many free peoples under the yoke of France, achieved less real grandeur than that petty prince of Nassau who founded the Batavian republic; and that modest citizen of the United States, who secured to his native country an absolute independence, free institu-

tions, and the elements of a prosperity unequalled in the world.

If Wellington do not possess the same title to universal admiration and the gratitude of the English people, to him, at all events, belongs the merit of having contributed, in a large degree, to fix those principles upon which the balance of power in Europe reposes, and of having established, by the unlooked-for success of his arms, the influence of Great Britain upon the Continent. It may be said of him and of Nelson, the founder of English superiority at sea, that they did more for the glory and prosperity of their country, than Alexander and Napoleon, notwithstanding their incomparable genius, achieved, — the one for Macedon, the other for France.

These are the reasons why the conquerors of Waterloo and Trafalgar received during their lifetime and, which is still more remarkable, after their death, so many marks of esteem and admiration. The most illustrious sovereigns of England did not attain to greater glory and popularity. Happy the nation which thus honours, above the distinctions of birth and fortune, eminent services rendered to the country and to mankind.

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ERRATA. Vol. I.

Extreme pressure for time, arising out of the operation of the International Copyright Act, must be my excuse for the following typographical errors; and, it may be, for many others, which I have failed to detect.

Page 3, line 11, from bottom, for "or Walter," read "for Walter."
" 13, " 13, and wherever after the word occurs, for "Oudenarde," read "Audenarde."
" 18, " 10, from bottom, for "Cearborden," read "Coervorden."
" 31, " 3, from bottom, for "Piron," read "Perron."
" 32, " 8, for "this French army," read "an army."
" 68, " 10, for "and this time under," read "and till this time under."
" 77, " 5, from bottom, for "to extend the territory," read "to extend the limits."
" 90, " 9, from bottom, for "a nonentity upon the testimony of Wellesley," read "a man in Wellesley's opinion, not to be relied upon."
" 93, " 17, for "concession," read "cession."
" 229, " 5, from bottom, for "act without control," read "act quite independently."
" 271, " 11, from bottom, for "Spanish," read "Spaniards."
" 289, " 9, for "basis," read "base."
" 303, " 4, dele "however."
" 314, " 16, from bottom, insert "a" before "diversion."
" 322, " 16, for "withdrawn," read "drawn."
" 329, " 1, for "Zirandra," read "Zizandra."
" 334, " 15, from bottom, for "lightly," read "highly."
" 337, " 4, from bottom, for "successes," read "success."
" 377, " 4, from bottom, for "held the extreme of the left line," read "held the extreme left of the line."
" 401, " 14, from bottom, for "this state of things did improve; indeed not till the end of the war," read "this state of things did not improve; indeed not till the end of the war."
" 449, " 5, for "to the castle," read "of the castle."

MEMOIR

OF THE

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE WELLESLEY FAMILY. — BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND YOUTH OF ARTHUR WELLESLEY. — HIS ENTRANCE INTO THE ARMY. — HIS SPEECHES IN THE IRISH HOUSE OF COMMONS. — HIS RAPID PROMOTION. — CHOSEN TO TAKE PART IN THE EXPEDITION TO THE COAST OF FRANCE. — ORDERED TO PROCEED TO OSTEND. — SITUATION OF THE ALLIED ARMIES. — RETREAT UPON ANTWERP AND BREDA. — WELLESLEY DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF IN THE COMMAND OF THE REAR GUARD. — HIS RETURN TO ENGLAND.

It is a curious fact that there should exist among authorities considerable doubt in regard to the exact date of the Duke of Wellington's birth. A vote of the Irish Parliament, as well as the assertion of his nurse, would seem to fix the occurrence of that event in the month of March; the parish register of St. Peter's, in Dublin, appears to show that Arthur Wellesley was baptized on the 30th of April; while a letter from his mother, equally with his own habit of keeping the day through life, marks the 1st of May, 1769, as that on

which he first saw the light. [We are inclined, for obvious reasons, to fall in with his own and his mother's judgment in the matter, and to account for the discrepancy between their statements and those of others, by referring it to the confusion which not unfrequently took place, even at that time, between the old and the new styles in fixing particular dates.] Be this, however, as it may, one not unimportant truth seems to be established, viz., that the same year witnessed the births of the two most remarkable men of the 19th century, Napoleon Bonaparte and Arthur Duke of Wellington.

It was observed by Louis XVIII., when referring to this coincidence, that Providence owed to mankind, in consequence of the birth of one of these men, a compensation in the birth of the other. [And a careful retrospect into history seems to prove that greatness, especially in war, has in almost every age made its appearance among men in duality.]

Another subject of speculation, bearing upon the event of which we speak, deserves to be noticed. The place of the Duke of Wellington's birth appears to be as little settled as the date. A Dublin journal claims for the capital of Ireland the honour of having first received him into the world, while the nurse who attended his mother in her accouchement has stated that he was born in Dangan Castle, in the county of Meath. [It is certainly not a little to be wondered at, considering the place which the subject of these speculations is destined to fill in history, that such points should remain to this day unsettled. And it is scarcely less so that they appear never to have been treated as worthy of a moment's consideration, either by the duke himself or by any member of his family. The truth is, that of the

early history of this great man very little is known. He neither kept a journal at any period of his career, nor has he left on record any loose memoranda, such as might be useful to his biographer in the investigation of minute details like these. And as he rarely spoke of his boyhood and youth, and never except incidentally, the inference to be drawn is, that boyhood and youth were not fruitful to him in very agreeable recollections. We must be content, therefore, to state such facts as may be accessible to all the world, and to state even these very briefly.]

[Arthur Wellesley was the fourth son of Garret, first Earl of Mornington, and derived his descent from a Rutlandshire family, which in the reign of Henry VIII. passed over to Ireland and settled in the county of Kilkenny. The name of this family was Cowley, or Colley, and the founders of that particular branch of it which took root in Ireland were two brothers, Walter and Robert. The descendants of both appear to have thriven in the land of their adoption, and to have served with credit in the army, in the law, and in the church. But it is with Walter and his children that we have exclusively to deal, or Walter was the immediate ancestor of the illustrious subject of this memoir.

Another family, also of English origin, though settled in Ireland, has, however, the honour of having given to the duke the name which he bore. Their patronymic was Wesley, and they owned at one period considerable landed possessions in the counties of Westmeath and Rosscommon. They do not appear to have greatly distinguished themselves either in public or private life; indeed, we hear nothing of them till about the middle of the seventeenth century, when Garret Wesley

married the great-grand-daughter of that Walter Colley of whom we have just spoken, as one of the founders of the Colley, or Cowley, family in Ireland.

The marriage seems not to have been fruitful, but it led to a close intimacy between the two houses, insomuch that, failing children of his own, Garret Wesley adopted a son of his wife's brother, and made him his heir. This was Richard, the youngest son of Henry Colley, by his wife, the only daughter of Sir William Usher, who was however required to take the name and to assume the arms of Wesley. Hence the substitution, in a family destined to become rich in warriors and statesmen, of one name for another; the latter of which had already attained to no mean distinction in the religious history of Great Britain. For as the word Wellesley is but a modern spelling of Wesley, so the same stock which produced the illustrious conqueror of the peace of Europe in 1815, had previously acquired fame of no common order, by giving birth to the founder of English Methodism in the year 1703.]

Of Garret Wesley we hear no more; but his adopted son, Richard Colley Wesley, after sitting for a while in the Irish House of Commons, was, in 1747, raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Mornington. His son, Garret married, in 1759, the eldest daughter of Arthur Hill, Viscount Dungannon, and in the following year, through the favour of George III., became an earl.

[Of the rare musical talents of that nobleman it is scarcely necessary to speak. Some of his compositions, especially his chants and anthems, continue to be regarded as among the most touching of those still used in our cathedral services. Indeed it was not a little owing to the community of tastes in this department of

art between him and his royal master, that he became a special favourite with the latter, and obtained his step of advancement in the peerage.

It is said of Garret, first Earl of Mornington, as it had been said of his father, that he was a good deal addicted to political intrigue. If this were really the case, he appears not to have intrigued, so far as his own interest was concerned, to any good purpose; for he died, in 1781, a poor man, leaving his widow and nine children in what may fairly be described as straitened circumstances. Possibly the tastes and habits of his countess may have contributed to bring about this result; for, though endowed with talents of a very superior order, she was by no means remarkable for her devotion to the amenities of domestic life. Her prejudices, also, appear to have been strong; and Arthur, her fourth son, was so unfortunate as to become to her the object of something not far removed from aversion. Hence he spent little of his time, as a boy, at home. Being considered, too, as the dunce of the family, no great care was used in selecting the schools to which he should be sent. When very young, he was placed at a private seminary, somewhere in Chelsea, whence, in a year or two, he was removed to Eton; but, either because he had been indifferently grounded at the outset, or had no taste in those days for classical study, he appears to have made little progress there, and certainly achieved no distinction. Indeed, his career was so completely devoid of mark of any kind, that no exploit of his, while an Eton boy, save only his pugilistic encounter with Bobus Smith, seems to be even traditionally remembered.]

The consequence was, that while his brother took

away all the honours and passed on to Oxford, and went through it one of the most accomplished scholars of the day,—Arthur, whom his mother described as being "food for powder, and nothing more," was removed to the Military College of Angers, in France, in order to prepare him for service in the army.

It was too much the practice in England, at the period of which we are writing, to regard the profession of arms as affording little or no scope for the display of more than very ordinary abilities. Aristocratic families were therefore in the habit of disposing of the duller of their sons by sending them into the army; while their more gifted scions won their own way to eminence, in politics, at the Bar, and in the Church. The consequence was, that in the entire roll of her generals, Great Britain could point to few of whom she had cause to be proud; and that she had never yet succeeded in acquiring such an amount of military reputation as was necessary to raise her above the rank of a second-rate power. In the case of Arthur Wellesley, however, it is just to observe, that the choice of his profession was not altogether dependent on this mistaken idea. In spite of his mother's failure to understand him, it is certain that he had received from nature many of the qualities which go to make up the character of a great commander. Not that we would seem, in the most remote degree, to favour the propensity, which is too common, of discovering in the most trivial incidents of their early life prognostics of the future greatness of distinguished men. It is a weakness into which biographers should be very careful not to fall, because, wherever it occurs, it leads to the most ridiculous results. One writer,—for example,—finding that his hero, when a school-boy, used to head

his young companions in their play-ground fights, assumes that Nature herself intended him to become a general. Another comes to the conclusion that the genius of a Michael Angelo was foreshadowed in rude figures scrawled upon the blank leaves of books, or, it may be, upon window-panes. A third believes that the accidental solution of a problem in geometry indicated the appearance of a second Archimedes among men. It is thus that the great law of gravitation has been represented as revealing itself to Newton by the fall of an apple from a tree;—that a deposit of vegetable matter, left by the receding tide on the sea-shore, satisfied Columbus of the existence of the American continent;—and that the taming of Bucephalus made Alexander feel that he was born to be the conqueror of the world. So grows upon us that taste for the marvellous, which ends in making us attribute the renown of others, and sometimes even our own, to trifling incidents or the caprices of fortune, instead of tracing it to that which is the common root of eminence among men,—labour, sustained by a will at once determined and persevering.

Great men make themselves great. They owe comparatively little to nature, and nothing to accident; and never, perhaps, was the truth of this axiom more clearly demonstrated, than in the career of the late Duke of Wellington. He quitted Eton altogether undistinguished; he completed his course at Angers without attracting the slightest notice; and, in 1787, being seventeen years of age, became an ensign in the 41st Regiment of Foot. His promotion was rapid, and he passed on two separate occasions from the infantry into cavalry, and back again. The regiments in which he served were—the 41st Foot; the 12th Light Dra-

goons; the 76th Infantry; the 18th Cavalry; and last, and for the most extended period as a regimental officer, the 33rd Foot. The dates of his commissions ran thus:—

Ensign - - - -	7th March, 1787.
Lieutenant - - - -	25th March, 1787.
Captain - - - -	30th June, 1791.
Major - - - -	30th April, 1793.
Lieutenant-Colonel - -	30th September, 1793.
Colonel - - - -	3rd May, 1796.

The 33rd Regiment of Foot he joined as a major, in 1793, and becoming before the close of the year lieutenant-colonel, he remained in command of it, till advanced, in 1802, to the rank of major-general.

It will be seen from this statement, that Mr. Wellesley's promotion went on with great rapidity; and it is past dispute, that he neither earned, nor had any opportunity of earning it, by the display of conspicuous military talent in the field.

[Yet if the inference thence drawn be that he was either a careless or a common-place officer, great injustice will be done, as well to him individually as to history. The truth is, that with a manner and appearance both, as we are told, indicative of dulness rather than otherwise, Arthur Wellesley was always an observing and a thoughtful man. His reading might be desultory, but it was not neglected; and a memory singularly retentive enabled him to lay in a store of knowledge which never melted away. He was addicted also, in early life, to a habit which adhered to him up to extreme old age,—that of making himself acquainted, in all manner of odd ways, with everything worth notice which passed around him. No exhibition of a new discovery, no dis-

play of ingenuity or skill, be it ever so absurdly applied, failed to number him among its investigators; and he was not only quick in calculating and drawing inferences, but in a marked degree addicted to both practices. Indeed the writer of this paragraph has more than once heard him say, "That he considered the power of rapid and correct calculation to be his special talent; and that, if circumstances had not made him a soldier, he would have probably become distinguished in public life as a financier." With all this, however, it must be acknowledged that Mr. Wellesley's habits, when a very young man, were scarcely such as to give much promise of future greatness. He was fond of pleasure, and indulged his taste freely; so much so, indeed, as to involve himself on one—though only on one occasion—in serious difficulties. The circumstances of the case are said to have been these.]

He had barely reached the legal age of twenty-one when he took his seat in the Irish House of Commons as member for the family borough of Trim. He was then a captain of cavalry and aide-de-camp to the Lord Lieutenant. Now Lord Camden's court happened to be particularly gay, and the ladies and gentlemen of whom it was composed spent their money freely. Young Wellesley, whose good humour and devotion to the service of the ladies was remarkable, plunged headlong into the vortex, and, as he had little to depend upon except his military pay, he soon found that the game was as costly as it was agreeable. The story told of him is, that, on two separate occasions, he owed his escape from grave embarrassment to the kindness of Dublin tradesmen. One of these, a shoemaker, in whose house he lodged, furnished him with the means

of paying a bill which had become due and which he was unable to meet. Another, a draper, by name Dillon, took charge of his affairs, and so enabled him, when ordered on foreign service, to quit Dublin. These facts, if facts they be, are the more deserving of notice, as he was never afterwards known to owe a shilling. Indeed, a well ordered economy in the management of his private expenditure formed one of those characteristics which distinguished him through life. [And it was the more striking, that it never interfered to prevent acts of the most open-handed generosity. The writer of these sentences enjoyed, on several occasions, the great privilege of spending days together with the illustrious Duke in the retirement of Walmer Castle. At such times his grace did not hesitate to converse freely about himself, and, the subject of subscriptions and of charities happening to arise, he once produced his well-kept account-book for the year. It appeared from that document, that he had given away between January and December considerably more than 4000*l.* "I make a point now," he used to say, "of paying my own bills, and I advise everybody to do the same; formerly I used to trust a confidential servant to pay them, but I was cured of that folly by receiving one morning, to my great surprise, duns of a year or two standing. The fellow had speculated with my money and left my bills unpaid." Talking of debt his remark was, "It makes a slave of a man. I have often known what it was to be in want of money, but I never got into debt." His grace had either forgotten the affair with the Dublin tradesmen, or, which is quite as probable, the whole story may deserve to be treated as apocryphal.]

Mr. Wellesley's career as an Irish senator must have been little noteworthy, for no authentic records of it survive. Sir Jonah Barrington, indeed, says of him that he spoke rarely, and describes his appearance as boyish, his complexion ruddy, and his address awkward. But Sir Jonah Barrington is scarcely an authority which any historian or biographer would care to quote. And as to the popular denunciations of his Toryism, these must be taken for exactly what they are worth. He inherited, no doubt, the principles of his family, which associated in those days loyalty to the crown with a steady support of the Protestant Established Church, and he could not, if he spoke of the horrors of the French Revolution at all, speak of them except in terms of reprobation. But young Wellesley never aspired to take the lead, or play any conspicuous part, in debates. He was no rival in eloquence, nor pretended to be, to the Grattans and Parnells, who were his contemporaries.

[Such appears to have been the general tenor of Mr. Wellesley's life from 1791, when he took his seat in the Irish House of Commons, up to 1794, when he was ordered, with the 33rd Regiment, of which he was in command, on foreign service. We do not find that he maintained during this interval any very close or affectionate intimacy with the other branches of his family. His mother, indeed, as far as we can learn, made few special efforts to bring him near her; with his brothers, and especially with the Earl of Mornington, he corresponded at intervals in a friendly manner. But of these letters none have been preserved, and we thence infer that they were not occupied with discussions which either the writer or the receiver thought

it worth while to remember. One incident, however, in his personal history must not be passed over, not alone because it exercised great influence over the whole of his future career, but because it had well nigh resulted in his retirement from the army.

[Lady Catherine Packenham, third daughter of Edward Michael, Earl of Longford, was one of the reigning beauties in the circle of the vice-regal court. She won the affections of Mr. Wellesley and gave him her own in return; but the worldly means of both were slender, and the lady's father refused, on that account, to sanction the marriage. It was a severe blow to the young colonel, but he bore up under it with characteristic fortitude; and as he received from Lady Catherine the assurance that she should always look upon herself in the light of being betrothed to him, he resolved to wait for better times, and to accompany his regiment to the Continent.]

It was at this time that the English Government conceived the idea of attempting a diversion in favour of the French Royalists by making a descent upon the coast of Brittany. The Earl of Moira, afterwards Marquis of Hastings, was appointed to command the expeditionary force, of which the 33rd Regiment was to form a part; but before the troops could be assembled evil tidings arrived from the Netherlands, and it was resolved to abandon the enterprise in Brittany, and to send Lord Moira with his little army to reinforce the Duke of York. In consequence of this change of plan, Colonel Wellesley, towards the end of May, 1794, took the command of his regiment at Cork, and early in June passed over with it to Ostend. Lord Moira, with the residue of his troops, arrived a few days afterwards,

and preparations were immediately made to open the campaign.

The situation of the allies was at that moment deplorable in the extreme. The incapacity of their leaders — the absence of all good understanding among themselves — the inadequacy of their resources in men, money, and material — and last, though not least, the slender support afforded by the Belgians, among whom Revolutionary principles had already struck root, entirely crippled them in their operations. Before Lord Moira could reach Ostend, Ypres and Bruges were in the hands of the enemy, and the Duke of York, driven from his position at Oudenarde, was retiring along the course of the Scheldt. Under these circumstances, the commander of the expeditionary force considered it judicious to send round the garrison of Ostend, including Colonel Wellesley's regiment, by sea to Antwerp, while he himself, with the residue of the troops, should endeavour, by forced marches, to form a junction with Clairfayt's corps. It was indeed the only course left open to him; for the Prince of Coburg had received a severe check at Fleurus, while Clairfayt was making preparations to withdraw from Ghent, and unite himself with the main body of the allies, now in full retreat upon Maestricht.

Lord Moira quitted Ostend on the 29th of June, just in time; indeed his rear-guard was in the act of filing out of the town when the Republican troops showed themselves in force before it. A hot pursuit began, which was not a little harassing to the English; for the rain fell in torrents, and their marches were both toilsome and difficult. They were attacked, and forced to sustain a sharp encounter at Alost, but their loss in

that affair was not great, and they suffered nothing in reputation, Lord Moira resuming his march, after the battle was over, without being molested. He arrived at an opportune moment to support the Duke of York, on whom Pichegru had fallen with great vigour in the vicinity of Malines.

Meanwhile the Dutch army, under the Prince of Orange, was compelled, after the check at Fleurus, to retire upon the same point. In their first attack the French had indeed been repulsed; but a second obliged the allies to fall back upon Antwerp, where they were reinforced by a junction of the garrison of Ostend, under the command of Colonel Vyse. It was here that, for the first time, Wellesley found himself in presence of an enemy.

While these things were going on elsewhere, Jourdan had attacked the Austrians at the Montagne de Fer, near Louvain, and made them pay dearly for the hardihood with which they waited to receive him. Uneasy for their communications, and anxious to feel the touch towards Cologne and Coblentz, they repassed the Meuse, near Maestricht, on the 27th of July, and abandoned thereby to the Republicans all the advantages of the campaign. The Republicans, however, committed this serious mistake, that they remained two whole months inactive; and their movement, when at last they did make it, was at once false in principle and defective in execution. Instead of crushing in detail the two allied masses, which had taken diverging lines of retreat, and lost their communications, they divided their own force, and pushed back the enemy's generals upon the positions which they were severally desirous of occupying. Hence the Duke of York succeeded in gaining the

Meuse, from which he hoped to cover Holland; while the Duke of Coburg took post upon the Rhine, the proper base of his operations. .

Such an accumulation of blunders in the course of a single campaign had never been witnessed before. The evacuation of Belgium, after the loss of the battle of Fleurus, was an act of conspicuous folly. Nothing could have been more easy than for the allies to reunite their forces in the vicinity of Brussels, and to profit by the enormous fault of which the Committee of Public Safety had been guilty, when it compelled Pichegru to occupy Ostend and Nieuport, and ordered Jourdan to support that proceeding by detaching from the army of the Sambre and the Meuse, upon Mons. But instead of turning this error to account, the allies fell into another of the same kind, by retiring in separate masses towards the Waal and the Rhine. Common sense ought to have taught them, that the only means of at once preventing the French from invading Holland, and of retaining their own hold upon Belgium, was to reunite the whole of their strength upon the Meuse, an operation which could have been easily effected in the month of July, and was still practicable after the Duke of York had reached Breda.

It was in the month of September that the Anglo-Dutch army quitted its position at Antwerp and took the road to Holland. On the fifteenth it found itself engaged in a serious affair with the right wing of the army of the north at Boxtel. The republicans had carried the village of that name on the previous evening, and occupied it in force; whereupon the Duke of York directed General Abercrombie to retake it with two battalions of guards, four regiments of the line, a

brigade of artillery, and a few squadrons of horse. The English advanced with great courage, but the well-directed fire of the French infantry, followed by a vigorous charge of cavalry, threw them into confusion. Colonel Wellesley saw what had occurred, and, deploying his regiment with great promptitude, checked the enemy's advance. The village was not retaken, but the assailants were enabled to continue their retreat in good order and without serious loss.

It was in consequence of the excellent service rendered on that day by the 33rd Regiment, and the coolness of its young commander, that General Dundas, an officer of great merit and a strict disciplinarian, placed Colonel Wellesley, a little later, at the head of a brigade, and entrusted to him the care of covering the retreat of the army. The young Lieutenant-colonel discharged the duties arising out of that command with remarkable intelligence.

After the affair at Boxtel, the Duke of York moved upon the Meuse and carried the Castle of Crèvecœur, which commands the sluices of Bois-le-Duc. He did not, however, remain long upon the river without being attacked; indeed, towards the end of October his position became so unsafe, that he found himself under the necessity of passing the Waal. It was the last movement which he made during the campaign. Recalled on the 2nd of December, he delivered over the command to the Hanoverian General, Count Walmoden, and embarked for England.

Much agitation prevailed throughout Holland at this time, as well as great discontent with the existing government. Indeed, there was a party opposed to the Stadtholder, so violent, that it demanded nothing less

than a union with France. Meanwhile the fortresses, badly armed and inadequately supplied with men and stores, could oppose few obstacles to the progress of the enemy. Breda, Bois-le-duc, with almost all the strong places on the left bank of the Waal, fell into the hands of the enemy, whom the proximity of the allied troops did not prevent from taking possession of Nimeguen also.

There was nothing in the condition of any of the rest of the fortresses which gave promise of a stouter resistance ; yet the notion was entertained that the French might after all be stopped by the interposition of the Waal itself. The severe frost which set in, however, enabled the Republicans to pass the river upon the ice, and afforded them every chance of reaching Amsterdam without meeting with any serious difficulty. Hence, at the very time when the campaign appeared to be drawing to an end, the English army was obliged to fight fresh battles between the Waal and the Leck. In one of these which took place near Meteren, Colonel Wellesley was again enabled greatly to distinguish himself.

The Waal above Nimeguen was scarcely cleared ere the States of Utrecht sent in their submission to General Pichegru, and, on the 18th of January, the French army entered the capital of that province without being opposed. Amsterdam immediately followed the example of Utrecht, and was occupied two days subsequently, amidst demonstrations of the liveliest joy.

From that moment the Dutch army, of which the head-quarters were at Gorcum, found itself completely turned. The Prince of Orange ascertained, moreover, that his troops were no longer to be depended upon, and feeling himself powerless in a country which wel-

comed the enemy with enthusiasm, he withdrew to Scheveningen, and there embarked for England.

While these things were going on, the condition of the British troops had become almost intolerable. The cold was intense, and they were destitute both of *matériel* and provisions, which the Dutch made no effort to furnish, and about which the Germans showed themselves equally indifferent. Nor, looking to the state of public feeling at the time, are these circumstances greatly to be wondered at. The allied armies had sustained one defeat after another; everywhere there was a disinclination to offend France, and among the lower orders of society at all events, and in circles above the lowest, deep sympathy prevailed with the principles on which the Revolution had been founded. English historians have not hesitated to attribute the apathy thence arising to treason, and, regarding the matter from their own point of view, it was natural that they should do so.

Oppressed with cold almost unexampled in Central Europe, destitute of resources, and hotly pursued by the Republican troops, the army of Walmoden passed the Leck in January, 1795, and gaining in succession Amsterdam, Deventer, Cearborden, Sneppen, and Emden, there re-embarked as soon as the weather would permit for England. Its sufferings throughout this march had been extreme, for the men waded more than ankle-deep in frost and snow, and they were aggravated by the circumstance that the inundations presented no obstacle to the movements of the enemy, who were constantly at their heels.

General Jomini, and other military writers, have compared this long and painful retreat, so far as re-

gards the sufferings of the troops and the intensity of the cold, to the disastrous campaign in Russia. Wellesley, however, whose brigade formed the rear-guard, made himself conspicuous as often as an opportunity came in his way, for courage and coolness: indeed the soldier-like qualities which he displayed on that occasion were, according to Colonel Gurwood, considered by Sir James Craig and other meritorious officers, to foreshadow the renown which he afterwards acquired.

His first campaign, short as it was, and disastrous to the English army, could not fail of proving useful in no common degree to Wellesley. In default of examples to imitate, he discovered endless blunders to avoid, for almost every disaster could be traced back to the vices inherent in the military system of Great Britain. There was, for example, a government destitute of experience in war, which yet took upon itself to form plans of campaign, and to insist upon their being followed; there was a divided command, without the talent necessary to surmount the inconveniences inseparable from such a state of things; and of sympathy and mutual trust between the powers which undertook to support one another, there was not one iota. Hence, with soldiers perfectly drilled and appointed, of admirable bravery in battle, and patient under suffering, the Duke of York sustained only reverses: while the young conscripts of France, badly dressed, badly equipped, but led by experienced officers, obtained a succession of brilliant victories. The contemplation of these facts produced a strong effect upon the mind of Wellesley, and led him early to perceive the sort of reforms which were needed in the organisation, management, and discipline of the English army.

It was the will of fortune, which seems to delight in grotesque antagonisms, that Wellesley, should witness these reverses upon the very field where, twenty years subsequently, he caused the same army to triumph over the best appointed troops and the greatest captain of modern times. No less remarkable is the fact, that Napoleon Bonaparte should have achieved his first success at Toulon, within easy distance of that island to which on a future day he was sent as a proscribed exile. Strange caprices of destiny these! Strange coincidences from first to last, that thus should have been born as it were at the same time, and placed the same year in the arena, the two champions raised up to decide the great contest of the eighteenth century,—between revolution on the one hand and legitimacy on the other. Indeed the parallel between their destinies went still further. So early as 1799, these two predestinated men narrowly escaped being brought into collision within the vast theatre of the East, wherein both laid the foundations of their future glory. But it was not so ordered. For fifteen years fate kept them asunder, and at the appointed hour they met to bring about upon the field of Waterloo the restoration of peace to Europe and the independence of nations.

CHAP. II.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST TIPPOO SAHIB, 1799.

WELLESLEY EMBARKS FOR THE WEST INDIES. — RETURNS TO PORT. — CHANGE OF DESTINATION. — PROCEEDS TO CALCUTTA. — IS APPOINTED TO AN EXPEDITION AGAINST MANILLA. — RECEIVES COUNTER ORDERS. — STATE OF INDIA ON THE ARRIVAL OF LORD MORNINGTON. — VAST PROJECTS OF THAT STATESMAN. — SERVICES WHICH HE RENDERED TO WELLESLEY. — LICENTIOUSNESS OF THE FRENCH TROOPS IN THE SERVICE OF THE NIZAM. — TREATY OF ALLIANCE WITH THAT PRINCE. — INVASION OF MYSORE. — AFFAIR OF SIDASEER. — BATTLE OF MALLAVELLY. — SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF SERINGAPATAM. — ARTHUR WELLESLEY IS NAMED GOVERNOR OF THE CITY. — PARTITION OF THE DOMINIONS OF THE SULTAN. — WELLESLEY IS CHARGED WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PORTION RESERVED FOR ENGLAND. — HIS SERVICES IN THAT POSITION. — EXPEDITION AGAINST DHOUNDIAH WAUGH. — DEFEAT AND DEATH OF THAT CHIEF. — WELLESLEY PROCEEDS TO TRINCOMALEE TO COMMAND AN EXPEDITION AGAINST BATAVIA. — HIS CORPS RECEIVES ORDERS TO PROCEED TO EGYPT. — WELLESLEY IS SUPERSEDED BY GENERAL BAIRD. — IS APPOINTED SECOND IN COMMAND TO THE EXPEDITION. — FEVER STOPS HIM. — HE RETURNS TO SERINGAPATAM.

[EARLY in the spring of 1795, Colonel Wellesley landed with his regiment at Harwich. He marched with it to Warley, in Essex, where a camp was formed, and obtaining a short leave of absence he proceeded to London, and thence to Trim, in Ireland. There appears to have been a good deal of pressure upon his mind at this time, from what causes originating there is nothing to show. But probably straitened means and the

desire to fulfil an honourable engagement were not without their effect in producing it. Be this, however, as it may, the fact is certain that he seriously meditated retiring from the service, and consulted his brother, the Earl of Mornington, as to the career in civil life which it would be prudent to follow. The result was the following letter to Lord Camden, than which no more interesting or important document has ever been brought under public notice :—

"Trim, June 25, 1795.

"My Lord,

"I have frequently intended to speak to your Excellency upon the subject with which I am now going to trouble you, and I have always been prevented by the fear that you should imagine that I was pressing myself upon you in an indecent manner; but as I told you in London that I should take some opportunity of stating the claims which I thought I had upon the Government of Ireland, I hope you will not conceive that I presume upon your kindness and partiality in so doing at present, as I assure you nothing but the circumstances under which I labour would induce me to trouble your Excellency's government at any time.

"The offices to which Lord Mornington has desired me to look are those of the Revenue and Treasury Boards; and considering the persons who are at present at those Boards, and those who, it is said, are forthwith to be appointed to vacancies likely to be made at them, I hope that I shall not be supposed to place myself too high in desiring to be taken into consideration upon the first vacancy at either of them. If your Excellency and Mr. Pelham are of opinion that the offices at those boards are too high for me, of course you will say so;

and as I am convinced that no man is so bad a judge of the justice of a claim as he who makes it, I trust you will not believe that I shall feel otherwise towards you than as I have always felt, with sentiments of the greatest regard, and with an anxious wish to render you and your government every service in my power, in whatever situation I may be placed. With those sentiments I accompanied you to Ireland, and whatever may be your decision on the subject, I shall retain them. You will probably be surprised at my desiring a civil instead of a military office. It certainly is a departure from the line which I prefer; but I see the manner in which the military offices are filled, and I don't wish to ask you for that which I know you cannot give me.

"I have now delivered my mind from a considerable burthen; and although the necessities under which I labour from different circumstances have nothing to do with the question whether I have a claim to the offices I have mentioned, I again repeat, that nothing but them should induce me to trouble your Excellency's government at any time.

"I have the honour to be, my Lord,
"Your Excellency's most faithful and obedient servant,
"A. WESLEY."

We have inserted this letter without presuming to correct even the single clerical inaccuracy which occurs in it, because it is proper that the British people should read the letter, exactly as it was written, which had well nigh cut short the military career of their greatest hero. On what apparently trivial accidents the affairs of men depend! Had Lord Camden received Colonel Wellesley's application with favour, the latter would have

doubtless settled down, and become a highly respectable married man as well as a useful public servant. What would have been the fate of the Spanish peninsula, of Napoleon the First, of France, and of Europe, who shall undertake to surmise?

The answer to this remarkable letter has, unfortunately, not come into our possession; but we may easily guess at its substance. The civil office for which Colonel Wellesley applied was not conferred upon him, and in the following October he received orders to join an expedition which the government was preparing to send against some of the French settlements in the West Indies. The fleet which was to convey the troops to the place of their destination was commanded by Admiral Christian, and Colonel Wellesley took a passage in his ship. But fortunately for England, not less than for his own renown, every attempt to prosecute the voyage proved abortive. The squadron put to sea from Southampton in defiance of heavy squalls. Long before it cleared the channel the squalls became storms, and after six weeks of danger and suffering to all on board, the fleet was obliged to return in a disabled state to Spithead.] Had no equinoctial gales blown, the future deliverer of the Peninsula would have probably ended his days, as too many young heroes have done, unhonoured and unwept on one of the sugar islands of the Atlantic.

The troops were immediately disembarked, and the plan of the West Indian expedition being abandoned, Wellesley proceeded with his regiment to Poole. Here, in April, 1796, orders reached him to proceed to India; but he was suffering at the time from severe illness, and found himself unable to obey them to the letter by embarking with his men. As soon, however, as the

state of his health would allow, he took a passage in a fast sailing frigate, and overtaking the regiment at the Cape of Good Hope, landed with it at Calcutta in February, 1797.

[From that moment a great change appears, so to speak, to have come over the whole moral and intellectual nature of the man. The habits of quiet observation to which he had long been addicted, expanded into reasoning. The experience which he had acquired in the Low Countries, of war and its requirements, seemed to act upon him with the force of inspiration, and his correspondence becomes in consequence both interesting and instructive in the highest degree. It is impossible, indeed, to peruse the letters which have been happily given to the public, and especially the supplemental volumes which the filial piety of his son and successor has brought to light, without being struck with the comprehensiveness of the views which in early manhood he entertained, and the clearness with which he expressed them. He is scarcely ashore ere his attention is drawn to the state of the Indian artillery, the whole of which, whether for field service or siege operations, was then dragged by bullocks. He sends back to Major General St. Leger a paper, on the contents of which that officer had consulted him, accompanied by remarks as judicious as they are practical. Much about the same time, in April, 1797, he communicates to his brother, Lord Mornington, the intention of the Bengal government to give him high command, and sets forth in simple language the characteristic, because disinterested, manner in which he had met the proposal. "It was proposed by Mr. Speke, the deputy governor," he says, "to give me the command of the expedition;

but I desired the person who communicated his wishes to me, to decline it in my name and to propose Doyle. If anything should prevent Doyle from accepting it, in case they offer it to him, and they should afterwards offer it to me, I intend to accept it; taking the chance that the large force that they intend to send, the known pusillanimity of the enemy, and my exertions, will compensate in some degree for my want of experience." A little later, in July, 1797, he expresses himself on points to which recent events attach no common interest, in the following terms: — "The natives, as far as I have observed, are much misrepresented. They are the most mischievous, deceitful race of people I have ever read of. I have not met with a Hindoo who had one good quality, even for the state of society in his own country; and the Mussulmans are worse than they are. Their meekness and mildness do not exist. It is true that the feats which have been performed by Europeans have made them objects of fear, but wherever the disproportion of numbers is greater than usual, they uniformly destroy them if they can; and in their dealings and conduct among themselves, they are the most atrociously cruel people I ever heard of. There are two circumstances in this country which must occasion cruelty, deceit, and falsehood, wherever they exist. First, there is a contempt of death in the natives, high and low, occasioned by some of the tenets of the religion of both sects, which makes that punishment a joke and I may say an honour, instead of what it is in our country. All our punishments almost are the same, excepting imprisonment and whipping, which occasion loss of caste, and are therefore reckoned too severe for the common crimes for which we inflict them at home.

The punishments of the Mussulman governments are precisely in the same state; the Hindoos don't care for them excepting they occasion loss of caste, and the Mussulmans are now so nearly Hindoos that they have not a better effect upon them. Secondly, there is no punishment for perjury either in the Hindoo or Mussulman law; their learned men say that God punishes that crime and therefore man ought not; and as oaths are notwithstanding administered and believed in evidence, no man is safe in his person or property, let the government be ever so good. The consequence of all is, that there is more perjury in the town of Calcutta alone than there is in all Europe taken together, and in every other great town it is the same."

Again on the 27th of the same month he urges his brother to accept the Governor-Generalship of India, in a tone which, besides being honourable to his understanding, has no little touch of sadness about it. "In a letter which I wrote to you I believe in the month of March, I pressed you to look to the government of this country, and you may easily conceive that I am glad to find that there is so near a prospect of my wishes on that subject being accomplished. I am convinced that you will retain your health; nay, it is possible that its general state may be mended, and you will have the fairest opportunities of rendering material services to the public, and of doing yourself credit, which, exclusive of other personal considerations, should induce you to come out." And then, as if the memories of his own not very sunny childhood and youth had come over him, he says, "I acknowledge that I am a bad judge of the pain a man feels on parting from his family — but in this case it is to be considered that it is impossible

to bring them with you, without doing each of them, according to their respective ages, a very material injury . . . I shall be happy to be of service to you in your government; but such are the rules respecting the disposal of all patronage in this country, that I can't expect to derive any advantage from it which I would not obtain if any other person were Governor-General."

The expedition in which he had been offered high command was to have had for its object the conquest of Manilla. It was an enterprise on which Sir John Shore and his advisers seem for some time to have been bent, and all the necessary preparations being completed the troops embarked. But they did not go on board till their young yet thoughtful commander had laid down, in a regimental order, specific instructions for the management of his men during the voyage. It is impossible to read either that paper, or his correspondence with the supreme government respecting the best mode of preserving the health of the troops, without being struck with his early attention to matters which are just as necessary to the success of operations in the field as the ordering of marches and the selection of positions. Nor did he now, more than in the subsequent stages of his career, limit his views to points purely military. The expedition proceeded no further than Pulo Penang, an island in the Straits of Malacca, the position and resources of which at once attracted his attention. He drew up an elaborate memorandum, in which he showed not only how the occupation of Penang might be rendered of great use to the British settlements in the East, but how it could be held, by a comparatively insignificant force, against all comers. Finally, when recalled to Calcutta, as occurred to him

not long afterwards (for the expedition to Manilla was abandoned through apprehension of dangers nearer home), he spent more than one leisure hour in placing upon paper his thoughts on the commerce and general condition of Bengal. Considering that he was then barely twenty-eight years of age, and that his past life had been one of action, not of quietude and study, and above all that his experience of Bengal and of the manners and customs of its population did not extend over quite six months, we read his memorandum at the present day with astonishment. Some of the opinions broached in it may indeed appear crude to us, by whom the principles of political economy are better understood than they were by our fathers sixty years ago. And here and there a fallacy is advocated, as when the young theorist protests that by the admission of East India sugar into England on the same terms as that raised in the West, not only would the West Indies be ruined, but England would find it impossible to man her navy. Still he who, in 1797, could argue generally in favour of throwing open the commerce of India to all British traders, may fairly be set down as entertaining opinions far in advance of the age in which he lived. But other subjects of inquiry were before him.

The government of Madras was held at that time by Lord Hobart, whose tenure of office was about to expire, and Colonel Wellesley, being an old acquaintance, paid him a visit at Fort St. George, previously to his departure for Europe. Wellesley's sojourn in the Madras Presidency on that occasion appears not to have exceeded two months. Yet such were already his habits of observation and reflection, that he returned to Fort William better instructed in regard to its resources and

capabilities of defence than any of the functionaries, civil or military, with whom he had come in contact. Hence we find him, in June, 1798, commenting with equal wisdom and moderation on a minute of the Governor-General, having reference to a recent proclamation by the French Governor of Mauritius. And when it is recollected that the author of that minute was Lord Mornington, who had just passed from the Board of Control at home to the Supreme Government of India, and that it was Colonel Wellesley's object to defer as long as possible coming to extremities with Tippoo Sahib, we cannot sufficiently admire the soundness of the understanding which, after arguing every point with the greatest clearness and precision, arrived by a course of obvious deduction at the following results:—"In my opinion, if it be possible to adopt a line of conduct which would not lead immediately to war, provided it can be done with honour, which I think indispensable in this government, it ought to be adopted in preference to that proposed in the conversations. . . . Let the proclamation be sent to Tippoo with a demand that he should explain it, and the landing of the troops (from Mauritius). Don't give him reason to suppose that we imagine he has concluded an alliance, with the objects stated in the proclamation; and, finding he has derived so little benefit from the alliance (the French had sent him only 150 men), there is every probability that he will deny the whole, and be glad of an opportunity of getting out of the scrape. In the meantime, we shall believe as much as we please, and shall be prepared against all events."

The paper from which the above extract is taken was written on the 28th of June. Early in July it was fol-

lowed by two other minutes, one "respecting collecting an army in the Barramahl," another upon the military capabilities of Barramahl itself. Now, Barramahl is a district of Southern India, which had been wrested from Hyder Ali by the treaty of 1792, and which, though less elevated than Mysore, was strong by nature, and interposed a considerable barrier between Seringapatam, the capital of Tippoo's kingdom, and the British territory. It was exactly the place in which, without giving any just cause of offence to the court of Mysore, preparations might most conveniently be made to meet all contingencies; and the suggestions thrown out by Wellesley as to the disposal of troops, the repair of fortresses, the laying up of stores, guns, provisions, and means of transport, resemble more what might have been expected from the victor of the Peninsula than from an officer whose only practical lesson in war had been learned in the Low Countries.

It was not, however, in reference to the state of feeling at Seringapatam exclusively that cause for anxiety existed at that time in Calcutta. A Frenchman, named Raymond, originally in the service of the East India Company, had been permitted by the British Government to take service under the Nizam, within whose dominions he raised a *corps d'armée* of 14,000 men, whom he disciplined upon the European model, and officered with his countrymen. No sooner was his footing thus established in the Deccan than he assumed the tricolor flag, hoisted the national cockade, and called himself a Republican. In March, 1798, M. Raymond himself died, and was succeeded by a M. Piron; but the feelings of the latter towards England were even more hostile; and he wielded his power with so little modera-

tion, that the Nizam was understood to be heartily tired of him. Thoughtful men, and among the rest Colonel Wellesley, became painfully alive to the danger which such a state of things could not fail to occasion. It was of the utmost consequence not only to hinder the Nizam from entering into a treaty with Tippoo, but to secure, if possible, his direct alliance with Great Britain; and this object, so long as this French army should continue to overshadow him, was, to say the least of it, not very likely to be attained. On this subject also Wellesley drew up a memorandum, of which it would be difficult to speak too highly. It not only disposes of the matter immediately under consideration, but touches also in a masterly manner on the entire subject of subsidiary alliances, the immediate disadvantages and inevitable results of which are thus described. After arguing for the adoption of measures which should break up and remove the French corps, he goes on to say:—

"The question then arises, whether it will be proper to keep in the Deccan a force which will answer all the purposes which it was intended that that of Raymond should answer. The Nizam's States being surrounded by Tippoo, and also the tribes of Mahrattas, are liable to invasion on all sides. If the Company furnish a force to defend him on all sides, they must be paid in the same manner as that of Raymond is, by the assignment of the revenue of a certain district to be collected by themselves, otherwise their payment will become uncertain; and they will, in that case, be involved in every war which the ambition either of the Nizam or of any one of his restless neighbours may occasion. I consider that the territory which might be assigned to pay these troops would soon be considered as part of

the general dominions of the Company; its produce would be considered as part of the general revenue, instead of something to be applied particularly to the payment of this force; and the Company's government would think it as necessary to involve itself in a war in its defence, as in the defence of any other portion of their dominions. For this reason I object to taking territory as a security for the payment of the troops employed in the Deccan. On the other hand, there will be no reason why the Nizam should be involved in our wars, and thus we shall gain a long defenceless frontier to preserve, without the advantage of assistance at the moment when those territories in which we are most interested may be attacked. It is, therefore, not advisable to assist the Nizam in the way of sending him sepoys, to a much greater extent than he has been assisted already. I mean if territory is to be taken by the Company as a security for their payment."

Meanwhile events were hurrying forward to a point, which was to open for Colonel Wellesley a career every way suited to his genius both as a soldier and an administrator. It will be necessary for a right understanding of these, that we turn back a little to history.]

At the period at which we have now arrived, the English in India had possessed themselves of extensive territories, and were beginning to reap the fruits of a system of conquests artfully disguised under the name of alliance and protection. The astonishing victories of Lord Clive, and the overthrow of Lally-Tollendal at Pondicherry, had at once ruined the influence of the French in the East, and confounded such of the indigenous sovereigns as were disposed to acknowledge their protectorate. One alone, Tippoo Sahib, the son of Hyder

Ali, the successful usurper of the throne of Mysore, continued to declare himself openly in favour of France. [And to effect his overthrow became an object of the first consideration to the local authorities.]

Lord Cornwallis held office as Governor-General when Tippoo was at the height of his power. He could not take the initiative in a contest with the Sultan, first, because his instructions from the Court of Directors prohibited aggressive wars, and next, because the force at his disposal was inadequate, assuming the Sultan to enter, as it is probable that he would, into alliances with his neighbours. But that which he did not attempt openly, he managed to effect covertly. Aware of the jealous temper, and unstable policy of Indian Princes, he engaged the Subahdar of the Deccan, as well as some portions of the great Mahratta nation, to break with Tippoo Sultan, and easily brought it about that they should apply to the English for support in a quarrel from which England alone could hope to derive solid advantages. It was one of those strokes of policy, by which Great Britain has contrived from time to time to render herself necessary to her neighbours in the East, and to acquire among them a character for disinterestedness and even for generosity, while she was pursuing objects which were entirely selfish. She interferes to protect when it is her purpose to extinguish, and is by little and little absorbing all the indigenous nationalities of India.

The first operations of Cornwallis were far from being brilliant; indeed it was only the opportune arrival of Mahratta succours which saved his army from perishing in the heart of Mysore, for want of provisions and means of transport. At the opening of the following year, 1792, a new expedition was set on foot, and

being better managed, it resulted in compelling the Sultan to sign in his capital a treaty which robbed him of half his empire. The gain to England on that occasion was, first an accession of some valuable provinces, and next, and more important still, the establishment of a paramount influence at the Court of the Nizam or Subahdar of the Deccan. And for thirty-five consecutive years she walked steadily in the same course. The seeds of dissension were carefully sown among Indian princes. Each was encouraged to apply to her for assistance, in his endeavour to resist or overthrow the other; while at the close of every struggle she stood forth as arbitrator of the destinies both of victor and vanquished — both of enemy and ally. No one will refuse to policy like this the praise which is due to great astuteness; if little defensible on grounds of moral right, success at least has justified it on every occasion.

Meanwhile France, whose interest it was to prevent this development of English power, made no attempt, after the loss of Pondicherry, to re-establish her authority in India. Nor, indeed, can it be said that even previously to that event, the Cabinet of Versailles ever distinguished itself except by its blunders; and yet there never was a time when either opportunities or time were wanting to it. Labourdonnais, who, after the capture of Madras, demonstrated in the Isle of Bourbon what the genius of a great man can effect, was recalled without any reason assigned. Three years he spent a prisoner in the Bastille, and when pronounced innocent and set at liberty, was left to die poor and disgraced in the bosom of his own family. Lally-Tollendal, the heroic defender of Pondicherry, a man honest, brave,

loyal, though somewhat eccentric, was led to the scaffold gagged like a base criminal, for offences which originated in ignorance of native customs, and the practices of Indian warfare. In like manner Bussy, to whose courage and ability France owed her brief sovereignty of the Deccan, found himself superseded by a chief destitute of all ability, and was forced to relinquish his important conquest. And Dupleix himself, the illustrious Dupleix, who had the wealth of India at his disposal, and turned away from it, was recalled, calumniated and outraged, and died at last a beggar in that very France which owed to him the acquisition of a province peopled by 35,000,000 of inhabitants.

Such base ingratitude, combined with profound incapacity, could not fail of hurrying on the destruction of the French factories, while it accelerated the triumph of their rivals, supported as these were by the firm and sagacious policy of the British Government.

When the Earl of Mornington, afterwards Marquis of Wellesley, assumed the direction of its affairs, serious dangers again threatened the fortunes of British India. Its financial condition was unsatisfactory in the extreme, its army at once weak and ill-appointed; while the native princes, some openly hostile, others secretly disaffected, were turning their eyes hopefully towards France. The most to be dreaded of all was Tippoo Sahib, who made no secret of the fanatical hatred which he entertained towards Great Britain, and who went so far, in one of his written communications, as to say that, "An Englishman, a dog, and a pig were three brothers of the same family." To great personal activity, and a restless desire of change, this man added such an

amount of mental culture and intelligence as is rarely to be met with among Indian princes. In some respects, no doubt, he failed to supply his father's place, for few Indian chiefs, at least in modern times, can be compared with Hyder Ali; but the one was quite as proud as the other, and to the full as vindictive, as is shown by the motto which he adopted as his own, "Better live two years like a tiger than two centuries like a lamb."

His regular army, the strongest and best disciplined of all that had yet appeared in the East, he raised to 76,000 men, of whom 6000 were cavalry and 30,000 infantry, organised upon European principles and commanded by French officers.

This formidable force, round which the troops of other powers, and especially of Scindia, might at any moment gather, operated as a standing menace to the English; and it was well for them that they had at their head a governor capable of dealing with the most gigantic enterprises. Such was the Earl of Mornington. His wonderful activity, his great energy, the strength of character and promptitude of determination which coincided with the extent of his knowledge, marked him as one formed for the chief direction of Eastern affairs. Subsequent experience proved that, in Europe, he could not rise above the level of many other English statesmen; but in India he eclipsed them all, by the elevation and farsightedness of his views, and the perfect success of his policy. His intelligence was greater, his probity more settled, than that of Clive. He was more energetic and more determined than Cornwallis, more discreet, more true to his word, than Hastings. His presence, during some years, in the Board of Control, over which Lord Melville ably

presided, had given him such a perfect insight into the interests of British India, that he found himself quite prepared, at the very commencement of his career, for the part which it would be his duty to play. The first conclusions at which he arrived concerning the state of the English possessions, furnish ample proof of this fact. He saw that the power of the mother country over India, depended entirely upon the opinion which the natives entertained of it; that 20,000 or 30,000 Europeans, dispersed among 100,000,000 of Asiatics, could not hold their ground except by the force of moral superiority; that this moral superiority must be sustained by perfect good faith and extreme vigour, and that, under such circumstances, the boldest policy is almost always the best. It was this which decided him to depart at once from the wavering and indecisive policy on which England had heretofore endeavoured to act. Instead of following Cornwallis and Sir John Shore in their schemes for the establishment of an impossible balance of power in the East, he determined to make the illustrious Lord of Plassy and Warren Hastings his political models. Like these great men, he believed that he should be able to realise what a Frenchman, in a former age, had proposed to bring about for his own country;—the teeming and sublime idea which the Court of Versailles contemptuously described as the "Dream of Dupleix." Besides, a policy of conquest had become such an absolute necessity in India, that both Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore were driven against their will to have recourse to it; while Lord Minto, Mornington's successor, after vainly endeavouring to adhere to antiquated errors, found himself constrained, during the last three years of his adminis-

tration, to adopt a different and more energetic course of action.

It is worthy of remark, that all the governors of British India, whose administration has led to important results, have profited by this lesson. Such were Lord Moira, Lord Amherst, Lord Auckland, Lord Ellenborough, and later still, the Marquis of Dalhousie; yet it cannot be denied that no common amount both of courage and ability was required to move the immediate successor of Sir John Shore into the footsteps of Clive and Hastings. Probably there was no man then living who could have brought the hazardous experiment to such a successful issue as Lord Mornington; for as Alison expresses it, "his energy and determination, his moral courage, and thorough acquaintance with military affairs, rendered him, even in the days of Pitt and Fox, the foremost statesman of his age."

In terms not less complimentary, a French author, M. Barchou de Penhoën, renders justice to the merits of that great man. "With the exception of Dupleix," he says, "no one ever took clearer or more comprehensive views of the affairs of India." And his acts corresponded with his opinions. He moved steadily forward in the way of innovation, and perfect success justified his boldness. Every branch of the public service felt his improving hand, and the whole Empire became, as it were, renovated. Indeed, it is scarcely going too far to say, that such a complete change, within so brief a space of time, in the conduct of military and political affairs, was never before witnessed in any country.

Lord Mornington found British India tottering—he left it consolidated and firm. The public service was enfeebled by corruption on his arrival,—on his depar-

ture it had become vigorous in the extreme. The government was entirely occupied with the defence of its own sea-coast provinces, when he took it up; when he laid it down, it was seated on the throne of Arungzebe. Three great powers were contending for the lordship of India, at his arrival; when he went away, no more appropriate title than that of "Anglo-India" could be applied to that enormous tract of country.

Such are Lord Mornington's merits; yet it is only just to add, that results so gigantic could not have been obtained within the space of five years, had not the Governor-General been supported by Lord Melville, President of the Board of Control, and afterwards First Lord of the Admiralty, as well as by the military talents of Lake and Colonel Wellesley. The latter, indeed, seems to have been consulted whenever any difficulty arose; and there is reason to believe, that his advice, dictated by a calm and impartial judgment, exercised great influence over the mind of the Governor-General; for Lord Mornington was entirely free from jealousy and petty pride. No one knew better than he how to encourage those who served under him — how to render them useful by showing that he trusted them. He left to his generals in the field extensive latitude, and assumed the responsibility of their acts whenever it became necessary to support them. It was a great advantage to Arthur Wellesley, that he began his career under the administration of such a man; and it was to Great Britain an event fortunate in the extreme that there should have been associated together, in frank and intimate communication, these two rare intellects, which contributed so effectually to establish at that epoch the supremacy which she still exercises over the countries

of the East. For while the one sought to form political alliances, and to render impossible, for the moment, a coalition between the Mahrattas and the Mysorians, the other was silently preparing the means of success in military operations.

The first care of both was to bring about the dissolution of the French auxiliary force at Hyderabad, and to re-establish the influence of Great Britain at the court of the Nizam. Now, looking to the unfortunate policy of Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore, in a recent war between the Mahrattas and the Deccan, this was no easy task. The Nizam felt that the English had on that occasion, deserted him, and it was only the fear of being engaged at once with them, with the Mahrattas, and with Tippoo, which induced him to come to terms.

[We have referred to a paper by Colonel Wellesley on this important subject, and quoted a passage which seems to condemn the whole system of subsidiary alliances. Colonel Wellesley, however, equally with his brother, saw that in existing circumstances it would be necessary to get rid of the French, and that the Nizam could scarcely be expected to assent to such an arrangement, unless adequate support were afforded him against his warlike neighbours. He proposed, therefore, that 5000 or 6000 men, with artillery, should be lent to the chief of the Deccan; that this force, though retained in the Company's service, should be paid by the Nizam, but that, like other portions of the Indian army, it should be relieved from time to time, and, finally, "as the practices of the native governments were so unsafe where troops were concerned," that in order to insure regularity in the payment of this force, and the con-

sequent maintenance of discipline, "the revenues of certain territories should be assigned." Such territories, however, were on no account to be regarded by the English Government as its own. They were neither to be defended by British troops "as a portion of the Company's general dominion," nor to be subjected, in any way, to British civil management. On the contrary, his suggestion was that the revenues in question should be assigned to the officer commanding the force in the same manner, and at the same stated periods, as if they were within the Company's territories.

It is very evident that the writer of this able paper could not shut his eyes to the more than probable results of the measure which he recommended. He would have averted these results had it been possible to do so; for, in common with all our ablest Indian statesmen, he deprecated an unwise extension of British territory in the East. But the pressure of the moment was irresistible, and Lord Mornington, whether sharing his brother's scruples or not, was obliged to give way to it. The alliance contracted in 1791 between the English and the Deccan was renewed. The Nizam agreed to dismiss M. Piron from his service, and to accept in exchange 6000 British troops, for the regular payment of which proper arrangements were made.]

Such were the terms of the treaty of the 1st of September, 1798. It was the revival of a system begun by Clive when he assumed the Protectorate over the Nabob of Bengal, and it has ever since been acted up to with more or less eagerness by every successive Governor-General of British India. Each protected native prince undertakes to pay and subsist an English corps, and to receive at his court an English resident.

The former maintain order and enforce the collection of the revenue, the latter exercises the functions of a veritable Proconsul. From that hour the prestige of the sovereign is at an end. He does the Company's bidding, yet is held responsible by his own subjects. The unpopularity is his, the benefits accrue entirely to the English. He becomes, in fact, a sort of conductor —on which the thunderbolt may fall without causing any damage to the Company.

Meanwhile as the 14,000 sepoys, under the command of French officers, were not likely to agree to the proposed arrangements, Lord Mornington sent to disperse them 6000 men of the auxiliary force which he had undertaken to furnish to the Nizam. This little army, under the orders of Colonel Kirkpatrick, arrived at Hyderabad on the 12th October; and, being joined there by a corps of the Nizam's cavalry, it presented itself on the 22nd in front of the French camp. The camp was in a state of great confusion, for on the previous evening a military revolt had broken out, and not only had the officers lost all authority over their men, but the men were at strife among themselves. No resistance was, therefore, offered to the work of disarmament, nor was one drop of blood shed. Finally, the sepoys entered without hesitation into the service either of the East India Company or of the Nizam, while the officers, being sent to England, were, after a brief delay, permitted to return to France.

Rendered secure by these arrangements of the support of the Nizam, the Governor-General turned his undivided attention to Mysore, where, in the person of Tippoo Sahib, France had an avowed partisan, and England a formidable enemy.

We have elsewhere spoken of the active habits of that prince, and of his natural aptitude for war. His character for personal bravery also stood high; and by the help of some French officers, he had succeeded in placing his army on an excellent footing. Now, his hatred of the English was as well known in London as at Calcutta, and from Napoleon, who already dreamed of wresting from England her Eastern possessions, he received the strongest encouragement to persevere in it. Scarcely was that wonderful man established at Cairo, ere he wrote to the Sultan a letter in which the following expressions occur:—"I write to inform you, that I have arrived on the borders of the Red Sea, at the head of a countless and invincible army, filled with the desire of delivering you from the yoke of England. I am anxious that you should send to Suez or to Cairo an intelligent person in whom you have perfect confidence, that he may communicate with me. May the Almighty augment your power, and destroy your enemies!"

There can be little doubt that Napoleon seriously meditated at that time an attack upon the British power in the East. He proposed to conduct it, by conveying to the Malabar coast such a body of troops as would justify Tippoo in taking the field, while he roused to action that powerful Mahratta confederacy, which, during the government of Warren Hastings, had more than once given great annoyance to the British Government. The British Government had, therefore, no time to lose. It felt that, with Tippoo on the throne of Mysore, its safety might at any moment be compromised; and it was supported in this view by the unanimous opinion of all its servants, civil as well as military. One of the ablest of these, Sir Thomas Munro, writing to

Lord Mornington, on the 7th of June, 1798, says,—"So long as the power of Tippoo Sahib exists, we shall always be in danger of losing everything we possess."

There was no need to look farther abroad for cause of quarrel with Tippoo. The intimate relations which he maintained with Buonaparte and the Directory, supplied a ready occasion for declaring war. Indeed, nothing except the imperfect state of his own preparations hindered the Governor-General from taking this decisive step on the instant. But the condition, not of the army alone, but of the public finances likewise, rendered this impossible. The truth is, that the Company's paper had become so greatly depreciated in value, that it was found difficult to provide cash for the payment of the troops. These were, in consequence, reduced to the lowest possible figure; insomuch that, for the invasion of Mysore, scarcely 14,000 men of all arms could have been got together.

Meanwhile the frontier fortresses had been left destitute of provisions. There were no magazines of stores anywhere; and the army, badly equipped and imperfectly organised, was destitute of the common means of transport. In a confidential letter, addressed to Lord Mornington by General Craig, he says:—"It is beyond dispute, that for the lack of two things—discipline and military knowledge—our Indian empire has, during the last four years, hung upon the lightest possible thread." Lord Mornington, assisted by the counsels of his brother, applied his whole energy to effect a change in this state of affairs. His inventive genius created unlooked-for financial resources; the fortresses were provisioned and stored; a corps of European volunteers was raised, which proved by-and-by exceedingly

useful; and, at the same time, every attention was paid to the organisation and equipment of the regular troops, while a considerable train of camels, for the transport of *matériel* and baggage, was got together. All this was the work of six months only; and so indefatigable were the Governor and his agents, that at the end of that period the game was in Lord Mornington's hands. He had then 30,000 men, in a condition to take the field, assembled in the Presidency of Madras, while 6000 more, under the command of General Stuart, were prepared, at a moment's notice, to act from the side of Bombay.

While these things were going on, the Governor-General obtained secret information that Scindia was engaged in an active correspondence with Tippoo and the French; and that the greater part of the Mahratta states, operated upon by the same influence, waited only a favourable opportunity to declare against the English. As he was impressed with the idea that the Peishwah and Scindia were the natural enemies of Tippoo, he made great efforts to attach them to the fortunes of England. But the Mahratta chiefs steadily rejected every proposal of this nature. All, therefore, that he could accomplish was, to exact from them an assurance that they would not make common cause with Tippoo; and with this arrangement, which, if not quite satisfactory, was, under the circumstances, the best that could be made, he was obliged to be content.

Having settled these points, Lord Mornington addressed a letter to the Sultan of Mysore, in which he demanded an explanation of the hostile attitude assumed by the latter, and especially of the reason which had led to the despatch of an ambassador to the Isle of

France. No answer was vouchsafed to this appeal ; yet, as he desired above all things to give proof of his own moderation, the only notice which he took of the neglect was to repeat his endeavour to settle the differences between the two governments in an amicable manner. The wily sultan, however, evaded this proposal also. He dealt with it, indeed, so as if possible to gain time; for he looked anxiously to France for succours, and calculated that if negociations could be drawn out to the month of May, the rains which then set in and continue up to the month of July, would sufficiently protect him till their arrival. But Lord Mornington was too well acquainted with the mischievous influence which these floods had exercised over Lord Cornwallis's expedition to be caught in that snare. And he received, besides, information which, had any doubts rested upon his mind, would have at once removed them. At the very time when Tippoo ought to have answered his first demand, General de Buc, accompanied by two of the great dignitaries of Mysore, was setting out from Seringapatam, to request that the French Government would send ten or fifteen thousand troops of the line, and despatch at the same time an imposing fleet to act in the Indian seas. The knowledge of this fact, added to the continued tergiversations of the Sultan, would have decided him to commence hostilities at once. But there were other reasons, scarcely less cogent, which could not fail to have weight with him. In the first place, his own preparations were complete, while those of the enemy seemed still to be going on. In the next place, the Mahratta princes, at variance among themselves, appeared willing to remain neutral. And lastly, Buonaparte, confounded by the disaster at

Aboukir, found himself under the necessity of abandoning for the moment, his designs upon India. All these circumstances were clearly favourable to an immediate commencement of hostilities, and war was in consequence proclaimed.

[It is to detract in no degree from the merit which attaches to Lord Mornington, when we say that in the arrangement of his great plans, as well as in clearing away the obstacles which opposed themselves to the execution of each, he received the most important assistance from the subject of this memoir. The Duke's papers show, indeed, that there was not a subject connected with the foreign policy or home administration of British India on which he was not consulted. One memorandum, which is headed, "Regimental rank in the army of the East India Company," takes a clear and comprehensive view of the whole military system of the country. It deprecates some changes and recommends others, as if with an intuitive foresight of results which have actually come to pass; and contains, among many curious statements, the following—strangely corroborative of facts which have only lately been forced upon our notice. Speaking of the transfer of officers from regiment to regiment, and alluding to the comparative value of the Madras and Bengal armies, he says, "Besides this benefit, it is certain that if the officers, when once posted to regiments, knew that they were not to expect to be moved from them, the army would be better disciplined. An officer never takes pains with a corps from which he knows that he can be removed when he pleases; his credit does not depend on the state in which it is found. The difference in the state of discipline of the army of the coast and that of

Bengal is a strong confirmation of the fact. At Madras it is not the practice to remove officers from one corps to another, except when absolutely necessary, and the army is in very high order; in Bengal, from circumstances which I shall mention hereafter, they are moved when and where they please, and there is no army that lays claim to the title of disciplined that is in such a bad state."

Another paper, on the "Defences of Oude," which was then an independent though friendly state, might be studied with great advantage at the present day. But it was after his arrival at Fort St. George, that his genius may be said to have fully developed itself. He finds there a new Governor, Lord Clive, whom he describes as "a mild, moderate man, having a bad delivery, and apparently a heavy understanding," but of whom he adds, "I doubt whether he is so dull as he appears, or as people here imagine he is." He wins the confidence of this "mild moderate man," and not only keeps him up to all that is right, but soon satisfies himself "that his abilities are better than Kirkpatrick represents them to be, or than people in general imagine." He comes in, with his clear judgment and that absolute self-control which was one of his characteristics, to smoothe down irritation where it has arisen, or to prevent its occurrence. There are differences of opinion between the supreme government and that of Madras; and the former, not unnaturally annoyed, writes, or is inclined to write, harshly to the latter. Colonel Wellesley opens his mind freely on the subject to his brother Henry, private secretary to the Governor-General—"I am anxious upon this subject, because I am afraid that anything like a harsh letter may do harm. Lord C.

opens his mind to me very freely upon all subjects. I give him my opinion, and talk as I would do to M. The truth is he does not want talents, but he is very diffident of himself; and now that he has begun to find out that there is no conjuration in transacting the business of government, he improves daily, takes more upon himself, and will very shortly have less confidence and reliance than he must have at present upon the opinions and abilities of those who have long done the business of the country. A violent or harsh letter from Fort William would spoil all. The conduct which I recommend is perfect confidence with him upon all subjects; and I would extend it even to his government, when it is safe to do so. There should be no jealousy, as there is really no danger of an interference in the duties or prerogatives of the supreme government; and if, by chance, either should be assumed by this government upon an occasion not very material, it would be better to pass it over, and not to notice any, except upon an occasion when the invasion of either may prove detrimental to the service. My idea is to avoid disputes upon petty subjects, which have one effect only, that of erecting little men, who are to manage them, into great ones. Small faults and omissions in the obedience to the orders of the supreme government, provided they do not lead to bad consequences, ought, for the same reason, to be past over. It may be depended upon that perfect confidence, refraining from noticing faults such as I have mentioned, and from naming and alluding to the persons whom M. thinks adverse to him, will have the best effects. . . With regard to my staying here, I am perfectly satisfied to remain here as long as my presence may be necessary, although I consider my situation a

very awkward one, and without remedy. I should not, however, wish M. to know that I feel it at all. As far as my stay regards my pecuniary matters I don't mind it. As the war in Europe is likely to last I shall certainly be made a Major-General in the course of a year, and I must then return. Whether I return 500*l.* richer in consequence of having been in command, or poorer in consequence of having been in Fort St. George, is a matter of indifference to me."

Colonel Wellesley's situation at Fort St. George could not be other than painful to himself. He held no responsible office there, and naturally looked for employment in the line of his profession. But his presence was of unspeakable importance to the public service. Over General Harris — a man of great merit, but not more than Lord Clive, possessed of high genius—he soon obtained the same degree of ascendancy which he had established over the governor; and he exercised it so discreetly, that the excellent general himself appears hardly to have been conscious of the power which swayed him. Once, and once only, between September and December, Wellesley was on the eve of being more specifically employed. This was soon after his arrival in Madras, when Lord Mornington proposed that he should proceed as envoy to Tippoo's court. But Tippoo refused at that time to receive an English ambassador, and the project fell to the ground.

From September till December, then, Colonel Wellesley remained at Fort St. George, holding no ostensible place under government, yet quietly directing and controlling its operations to the best purpose. To the last he was anxious to avoid war; yet he urged forward every necessary preparation to meet war,

should it occur. He pointed out, in various papers, that the contest ought to be one of a single campaign; that the army, strengthened from every available quarter, should march direct upon Seringapatam; and that to insure success in so bold an enterprise, it should be ready to take the field on the 20th of January at the latest. He showed how troops might be drawn from Ceylon; how the Bengal Marine battalion might be converted into a regiment 2000 strong; how a second Marine regiment might be created, "by changing the Calcutta militia into that description of force;" and how brigades and divisions might be posted, so as at once to guard against molestation from without, and to be in readiness, should the occasion arise, to move concentrically upon Mysore. Nor was he forgetful of the important points of supply and transport. In a letter to his brother Henry, dated 31st of October, he explained that 40,000 bullocks at least would be required; informing him, at the same time, that he had begun to urge the providing of these animals, of which about 12,000 had been got together. At last the moment arrives when he must exchange a career of counsel for one of action. Tippoo has rejected all the Governor-General's advances; he has refused even to receive the ambassador, which it was proposed to send to him; and nothing remains except to act against him with all the means which the British Government has at its disposal.

Tippoo had been improvident as well as obstinate. By advancing a claim to a fort and a portion of territory which belonged of right to the Nizam, he had converted the neutrality of that prince into hostility. The fickle Mahrattas were also won over, though their promises were not greatly to be depended upon, and both

powers agreed to supply contingents. Meanwhile, with a view to facilitate the despatch of business, Lord Mornington proposed to shift the seat of his government to Madras; a measure which Colonel Wellesley had often urged upon him, and which proved in the end of unspeakable utility. And then, and not till then, an opening for Wellesley himself was found. The bulk of the troops intended for the invasion of Mysore from the Madras side, had for some time been assembled at Wallajabad. They were under the orders of Colonel Aston, an officer senior to Wellesley; but Colonel Aston was so unfortunate as to get involved in disputes with a Major Picton and a Major Allen, and was killed in a duel with the latter. Upon this Colonel Wellesley received instructions to assume the temporary command; and such excellent use did he make of the brief interval afforded him, that when General Harris arrived at head-quarters in February, 1799, he found one of the best organised and disciplined armies ready to receive him that had ever taken the field in India. He marked his sense of the young Brigadier's merits by a complimentary general order, which, however, has unfortunately not been preserved.]

The army of the Carnatic, which concentrated at Vellore, numbered upwards of 20,000 men. Of these 4300 were Europeans, and 2600 cavalry; and on the 11th of February it broke up. Seven days afterwards it was joined at Killamungalum by the Nizam's Contingent, estimated at 16,000 men, of whom 6000 consisted of the English subsidiary force, while a considerable portion of the residue was made up of the sepoys enlisted out of Raymond's corps. Being desirous of placing at the head of this force an officer on whom he could depend, General

Harris increased its effective by joining to it the 33rd British regiment; an arrangement which enabled him to entrust the supreme command to Colonel Wellesley.

Meanwhile the army of the west, or of Bombay, under the orders of General Stuart, was directed to move from Cananore on the 21st, so as to gain Sedaseer, a post which overlooks Mysore, and to join General Harris under the walls of Seringapatam. It consisted in all of 6400 men, of whom about 1600 were Europeans. The operations of these two corps were supported by 4000 men from Southern Carnatic, and 5000 from Barramahl; it was the most formidable expedition which, up to that day, had been undertaken in India.

Harris passed the Mysorean frontier on the 5th of March, and began by seizing the forts which covered it. It was a prompt and vigorous aggressive movement such as Tippoo had not anticipated; indeed the delay of a few more weeks would have been of great consequence to the sultan, by enabling him to complete his own preparations and securing to him the support of France and of Scindia. Yet he had not been idle. When hostilities began, he had gathered together considerable means of defence, for Seringapatam was strongly fortified, and upwards of 50,000 excellent troops occupied a good central position in front of it.

Tippoo's first plan, on finding himself threatened by two separate corps, was to interpose between them and prevent their concentration. The idea was good, but the execution proved faulty; for, instead of throwing himself first upon one corps with his whole strength, and destroying it, and then marching immediately against the other, he moved with only 11,000 men to meet Stuart, whom he encountered on the 6th of March at

Sedaseer, a little way in advance of the frontiers of the Bombay Presidency.

The right of the English army, about 2000 strong, under the orders of Colonel Montressor, happened at that moment to be separated by a deep jungle from the left. For five hours it sustained alone the repeated charges of the Mysorean infantry, and, when reinforcements arrived, charged in its turn, and compelled the sultan to retreat. His loss, on the occasion, amounted to 1500 men, while that of the British army did not exceed 143 killed and wounded. Tippoo withdrew, after this check, into his camp at Periapatam, and did not quit it again till the 11th, when he made up his mind to try once more the fortune of arms at Mallavelly.

All this while Harris was advancing with his army slowly and painfully. The enormous quantity of baggage which he carried with him impeded every movement, while a fatal illness, which broke out among the bullocks soon after quitting the coast, added seriously to his difficulties. A large number of baggage animals perished, and the army was constrained to halt almost every second day, in order to repair its equipages and put the convoy again in motion.

So early as the 16th of March, eleven days only after crossing the frontier, the loss in powder, stores, and provisions had become so heavy, as to excite some alarm. Fortunately for the invaders, Tippoo, who, by a little skilful manœuvring, might have inflicted upon them serious loss, contented himself with harassing them from a distance with his tirailleurs. They were thus enabled to continue their advance upon Seringapatam without running any very serious risk. It was on the 27th that Harris found himself in the

presence of Tippoo, who occupied a range of heights above the village of Mallavelly, at a distance of about ten leagues from the capital. He made immediate arrangements to fight a battle, giving Wellesley the command of the division on the left, placing General Floyd with the cavalry in the centre, and himself assuming the direction of the right. The 25th Dragoons, with a regiment of native cavalry, kept in check a body of Mysorean horse, which had established itself on the right of the English.

The exhaustion of the bullocks, which dragged the guns, caused a good deal of time to be spent in completing these arrangements. Tippoo profited by the circumstance to throw his infantry upon Wellesley's division, which was still separated by a wide interval from the centre. At the same time a strong body of cavalry fell upon the right wing, where the commander-in-chief was posted; but both attempts failed.

It had been Harris' intention to commence the attack from the right. Wellesley, on the other hand, looking to the constitution of the enemy's troops, conceived that an attack by the left would be better; and, after communicating his views to the general, and receiving no orders to the contrary, directed the corps, of which he was at the head, to advance by echelons. After sustaining and repulsing with great steadiness several onslaughts, this corps threw in such a murderous fire that the ranks of the Mysoreans became confused, and they gave way. With exceeding promptitude, Floyd seized the moment to complete the victory. He charged at the head of his dragoons, cut to pieces large numbers of the enemy, and pursued their scattered battalions for some hours along the road to the capital.

MAP of INDIA

The success was complete; but Harris would have derived greater advantages from it had not the deplorable state of his equipages prevented him from following up with vigour the blow which was struck. Hence the beaten enemy made good his retreat to Seringapatam, leaving 2000 killed and wounded on the field; while the loss to the English did not exceed 300 men in all.

Harris arrived before the capital of Mysore on the 5th of April. On the 14th he was joined by Stuart, when his army amounted to 35,000 combatants, about 120,000 followers, and 100 pieces of cannon. The enterprise on which he had embarked was beset with difficulties, for between June and December the place could not be approached at all, while the garrison consisted of 22,000 picked troops, and 240 pieces of cannon were mounted on the defences.

It was resolved, under these circumstances, to direct the attack against the north-east angle of the place. The Cavery, though broad, was still fordable in that quarter, and the course of the stream would enable the besiegers to bring a concentrated fire upon the salient, as well as to enfilade the great curtain which ran along the river's bank.

Tippoo had established in front of the place an entrenched line of defence. It ran off for about two miles from a woody hollow close to the river, which was known as the Sultan's Pettah. This hollow, with a ruined village, formed the key of the position, and Colonel Wellesley and Colonel Shaw were directed, in the night between the 5th and 6th, to make a combined attack upon the two posts. Shaw's attack succeeded — that of Wellesley entirely failed.

Different reasons have been assigned for this failure. According to some accounts, Wellesley got confused amid the darkness of the night, and made his attack on the wrong point. If others are to be credited, all the blame attaches to Harris, whose general arrangements were at fault. Be this as it may, the fact is undisputed, that Wellesley's troops were received with such a heavy fire from the crest of the high ground, that they lost all order and retired in confusion. Twelve grenadiers of the 33rd, separating from their company, fell into the enemy's hands, and were carried before Tippoo, who at once gave instructions that they should be put to death, by driving nails into their skulls. And Wellesley himself, besides receiving a contusion on the knee, narrowly escaped a similar fate. He lost his way, wandered about for some hours, and did not reach the camp at last except alone, and greatly fatigued. He proceeded immediately to the general's tent, who was anxiously waiting for information. It is said that the young colonel appeared agitated when they first met. This is probable enough; but the feeling could not be either very keen or very deep-seated, for scarcely had the general withdrawn into another compartment of the tent ere Wellesley leant his head upon the table and fell fast asleep.

Attempts have been made to attach something like discredit to Colonel Wellesley in consequence of this failure. The author of the Life of Sir David Baird, in particular, more than insinuates, that to the generosity of his hero alone Wellesley owed it, that an opportunity was afforded him of retrieving his reputation on the following day. But there does not seem to be the smallest foundation in fact for such assumptions; [indeed, Wellesley himself, writing to Lord Mornington

on the 18th, describes the affair as one of those accidents which are not unapt to occur in all night operations; while he speaks of the successful attack on the following morning as a mere matter of course. "On the night of the 5th," he says, "we made an attack upon the enemy's outposts, which, at least on my side, was not quite so successful as could have been wished. The fact is that the night was very dark, that the enemy expected us, and were strongly posted in an almost impenetrable jungle. We lost an officer killed, and others, and some men (of the 33rd), wounded; and at last, as I could not find out the post which it was desirable I should occupy, I was obliged to desist from the attack; the enemy also having retired from the post. In the morning they re-occupied it, and I attacked it again at daylight, and carried it with ease and with little loss. . . . . I got a slight touch on the knee, from which I have felt no inconvenience; and I have come to a determination never to suffer an attack to be made by night upon an enemy who is prepared and strongly posted, and whose posts have not been reconnoitred by day-light."]

[From this latter expression, as well as from a letter addressed, on the 5th, to General Harris, we gather that, previously to the night attack, Colonel Wellesley had not been altogether satisfied with the dispositions which were made. "I do not know where you mean the post to be established," he says, "and I shall therefore be obliged to you if you will do me the favour to meet me this afternoon, in front of the lines, and show it to me. In the meanwhile I will order my battalion to be in readiness." In like manner it is apparent, from the whole tenor of his confidential communications with Lord Mornington, that neither the military system at

Madras nor the officers appointed to superintend its working were quite to his mind. So early as the 29th of January he had deprecated the appearance of the Governor-General himself in the camp, a measure which was then under discussion; and thus assigned his reasons: "I am entirely ignorant of the objects which you may have in view in coming, which may certainly counterbalance the objections I have to the measure; but it appears to me that your presence in camp, instead of giving confidence to the general, would, in fact, deprive him of the command of the army; and that scenes would be acted over again, probably in the presence of the enemy, which, to my annoyance, I have too often witnessed at Madras. Everything that the general might think necessary will be thwarted and canvassed, not by you, probably, but by those whom you will naturally wish to consult,—the general's own staff and the principal officers of the army; who ought to think of nothing except how his orders are to be carried into execution, instead of their propriety, and in what manner they shall thwart them if they do not approve of them. All I can say is, that if I were in General Harris's situation, and you were to join the army, I should quit it. In my opinion he is at present awkwardly situated, and he will require all the powers which can be given to him to keep in order the officers who will be in his army. Your presence will diminish his powers, at the same time that, as it is impossible you can know anything of military matters, your powers will not answer the purpose; while even those which he has at present may, if you or Clive are not in the camp."

To this sensible remonstrance Lord Mornington replied from Fort St. George, whither he had transferred

the seat of the supreme government pending the war, in the following terms. "Nothing has given me more pleasure than to hear from all quarters such unqualified commendations of your arrangements in your late command. I wish to God the whole were under your direction. . . . . I entirely concur in your opinion respecting the impropriety of my taking the field with the army; my judgment was always the same with yours; but certain persons made such a clamour on the subject, that I wished to know how you thought about it. Your observations respecting military counteractions in this place are perfectly just; it is with the utmost difficulty that I can restrain the council (I except *no one*) from interference with the commander-in-chief's arrangements; but I have now plainly declared war against every attempt of the kind, and I trust that Harris will now find no impediment to the prompt execution of such orders as must be carried into effect here."

In the same spirit Wellesley urged his brother to put a stop to the habitual interference of the civil government of Madras in the distribution of military patronage—even with armies in the field. "I hope," he says, "before you return to Calcutta, you will take measures to put his (the commander-in-chief's,) authority (which, in this country, where not one in ten comes excepting to make money, depends upon his patronage) on a proper footing. . . . Here the commander-in-chief, by the encroachments of Lord Hobart, first upon General Braithwaite, and lastly upon Sir A. Clarke (and by the operation of throwing all the military business of the army into the military board, where he debates with the officers who ought to execute his orders), has no more power over the

army than if he were a common soldier. The whole establishment look to the Governor for favour and promotion, instead of to their proper head; and thus it is that the commander-in-chief becomes contemptible to the army which he is to lead. I told Lord Clive all this long ago, and particularly stated to him the necessity of giving the general credit at least for the appointments by the different commissioners, if he did not allow him to make them. It was impossible to make him too respectable, or to place him too high, if he was to be placed at the head of the army in the field. This want of respectability, which is to be attributed in a great measure to the general himself, is what I am most afraid of. However, I have lectured him well upon the subject, and I have urged publicly to the army, in which I flatter myself I have some influence, the necessity of supporting him whether he be right or wrong. The ponderous machine is now nearly prepared, and all that we have to do is to put and keep it in motion. The general has three or four people about him very capable of it, if he can only keep them together. I have spoken to him about that, and I shall make it a particular object of my attention. He has confidence in me, and I don't fail to give him my opinion on every subject."

These are wise and noble sentiments, every way worthy of the future deliverer of the Peninsula. Yet the colonel had his own personal annoyances to put up with all the while. General Harris was not the man to control or direct such an ill-assorted machine as had been committed to his guidance, and we accordingly find Wellesley, on the 27th of February, thus writing to his brother:—

"General Harris has sent me an extract of a letter from Mr. Webbe to him, written by your desire. I am much obliged to you for the notice which you take of what I did for the public service, and I wish for several reasons that you had a commander-in-chief under you who, when he approved of the conduct of an officer, would have a sufficiency of spirit to make known his approbation. The fact is that when I went to the army, there was not a grain of rice to be got in the country; I bustled through the difficulty, and in a short time had plenty in my camp; and not only I took nothing from the public stores, but if what I desired had been done, I should have thrown a large supply into them, which I did not want; and notwithstanding all opposition, I did form a small store, which, if they had known how to use it, would have been of essential consequence in the moments of difficulty and scarcity. Besides that, I paid into the general's hands a sum of money for the public service, which other officers had always, heretofore, taken to themselves. The general expressed his approbation of what I had done, and adopted as his own all the orders and regulations I had made, and then said that he should mention his approbation publicly, only that he was afraid others would be displeased and jealous. One of these others, General Floyd, had been in a similar situation with mine, but his army was starving; he had been supplied from the public stores at Madras, Vellore, and Arnee, and latterly by me, from my camp. As, in fact, there is nothing to be got in the army but credit, and as it is not always that the best intentions and endeavours to serve the public succeed, it is hard that when they do succeed they should not receive the approbation which it is acknowledged by all they de-

serve. I was much hurt about it at the time, but I don't care now, and shall certainly continue to do every thing to serve General Harris, and to support his name and authority."

Colonel Wellesley is not the only man who has had reason, in the service of his country, to feel hurt, because "his orders and regulations had been adopted by others as their own" without so much as the poor recompense of a public acknowledgment; but he was more fortunate than many in this respect, that his own transcendent abilities, not unaided by the accident of his social position, gave him ample opportunity of vindicating in due time his claim to praise which would have otherwise been withheld from him. We accordingly find that Lord Mornington not only continued to consult him on all subjects of importance, military as well as political, but that he was at this very period appointed one of those commissioners, whose duties, as far as we are able to trace them, are not very accurately defined, though they unquestionably relieved General Harris from many anxieties, especially in the management of negotiations with the native powers.

Among other questions submitted to Wellesley was one involving the policy of sending Colonel Doveton to Tippoo, as the bearer of a last offer to accommodate matters, previously to putting the army in motion. He criticises it in all its details, and decides that Doveton should be sent. He comes to this decision, too, in the same spirit of entire devotion to duty which seems to have been the ruling motive of his whole life. "There is but one objection to this mode of proceeding," he says; "it is, that there is a risk of the safety of Doveton's person; but I put that out of the question, as, if the measure be a good one in

other respects, there is no more reason for not risking Doveton's person than there is for not risking that of any private soldier in the army." But we must return to our narrative of events, as they occurred.]

Nothing daunted by the failure over night, the sultan's advanced line was again attacked at dawn on the 6th, and after a smart, but not very fatal conflict, carried. Colonel Wellesley, on this occasion, stormed the Pettah in the centre; Colonel Wallace fell upon the right, and Colonel Shaw assailed the left. The trenches were immediately opened, and the siege-works vigorously pressed. On the twelfth, the first battery began to fire, but the range being distant, little effect was produced. On the 20th, Tippoo endeavoured to open a negotiation, and on the 22nd, General Harris sent in the draft of a treaty to which he invited the sultan to assent. But the latter, whose sole object was delay, proposed only an exchange of ambassadors; and General Harris, after a brief interval, resumed, with fresh vigour, the labours of the siege.

On the 30th of April, the breaching batteries opened their fire upon one of the bastions of the place, the curtain to the right of which had already been considerably damaged. On the 2nd of May, a large magazine, containing powder and rockets, exploded, causing great damage to the defences; and two days afterwards, 2500 Europeans, with 1800 native soldiers, paraded in the trenches, in order to deliver the assault. The command, on that occasion, was given to General Baird, who selected, as the proper moment for action, that period of the day when the heat is most intense, and during which Asiatics are in the habit of taking their siesta. When all was ready, he put himself at the head of his

men, and, exclaiming in few and soldier-like words, "My brave fellows, follow me, and show yourselves worthy of the name of Englishmen!" he sprang, sword in hand, out of the trench. A rush was instantly made towards the breach, but the enemy having taken the alarm, were at their posts, and a murderous fire was kept up on the assailants. Not for a moment, however, was the march of the column checked. Men so led could experience neither hesitation nor terror. "The passage of the rocky bank of the river, and the ascent of the breaches in the fausse-braie, and in the main-wall, were effected," says General Harris, "in the most gallant manner."

The besieged defended themselves with the utmost obstinacy, the sultan himself taking post behind a traverse, whence he kept up, like an ordinary tirailleur, an unceasing fire from his own carbine.

When the storming party reached the summit of the breach, an unlooked-for obstacle presented itself. This was a large ditch, full of water, which separated the wall of the fausse-braie from the body of the place. For a moment Baird hesitated, till, observing not far off a piece of scaffolding which had been used in repairing the wall, he rushed towards it. To lift this scaffolding, to place it across the ditch, and to spring over, was the work of a few seconds. Thus gaining the other side, the assailants reformed in two columns of attack, and penetrated into the town, in the streets of which the Asiatics continued to defend themselves with great determination. This was especially the case near the principal mosque, into which, as into an impregnable citadel, a body of fanatical Mussulmans had thrown themselves.

The great body of the troops, meanwhile, had at-

tacked the sultan's palace, into which they were endeavouring to penetrate, when Baird, in order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, gave orders to cease firing. He sent, at the same time, Major Allen, to summon the defenders to surrender, which at first they refused to do, not knowing what had become of the chief of the state. But when one of the sultan's servants announced that he had seen his master fall dead at the entrance of the city, the gates of the palace were immediately opened. In one of the halls were found the two younger sons of Tippoo, whom General Baird received with kindness, notwithstanding the indignation with which he was filled, on ascertaining at the moment how cruelly their father had behaved towards his twelve English prisoners.

The palace being occupied, search was immediately made for the sultan. He was discovered amid a heap of dead bodies in front of one of the gates of the city. His eyes were open, and the excitement of battle had left such a vivid impression upon his countenance, that in spite of the quantity of blood with which he was covered, he seemed still to be alive. For some moments all who gazed upon him were deceived.

Tippoo died an honourable death, with arms in his hands; in the midst of his soldiers, and on the threshold of his palace. It is told of him, that having descended during the assault into the ditch, he fought with such fury that an old wound in his thigh opened, and that, being unable to support himself, he called for a horse, that he might still continue the combat. It was only after the greater part of his people were slain or scattered in retreat that he thought of re-entering the city. But between the first and second lines of works a ball struck him on the right side. An English detachment,

meanwhile, had occupied the gorge of the interior passage, where a crowd of fugitives were huddled together. Beside this throng, which he vainly endeavoured to penetrate, and which fired upon itself, those within the passage pouring volleys upon those without, Tippoo received a second wound. His horse, struck at the same time, reared and threw him. Extricated by some faithful attendants, who placed him upon a palanquin, he was thrown down again by the oscillations of the crowd, and, this time, under the feet of the living and the wreck of the slain. It was there that two English soldiers discovered him. Tempted by the gorgeousness of his baldric, one of the two wished to seize that valuable prize. The dying man, making a last effort, half raised himself upon his elbow, and struck a blow with his sword at the soldier, which wounded him on the knee. The aggressor, wild with rage, applied his musket to the sultan's temples, and shot him dead. Thus fell the most formidable rival and determined enemy which the English were ever called upon to encounter in India. The fall of Seringapatam occurred just in time; for General Harris's stock of provisions were beginning to fail. There remained, indeed, barely sufficient for six days' consumption; and a convoy which ought to have come up, and was expected from hour to hour, did not arrive till the 15th.

If the English general had assaulted the town, as he did the Sultan's Pettah, at night, or if Tippoo Saib, instead of being content to discharge a musket, had acted the part of a judicious military commander, it is not improbable that the operation would have failed. Fortunately for Harris, however, the sultan was subject at that time to fits of mental derangement. The

author of the Asiatic Register asserts, indeed, that his mind was quite gone; while M. Barchou de Penhoën relates, in support of that assertion, that during the latter portion of the siege, Tippoo, besides being in frequent consultation with his astrologers, drank water out of a black marble vase, as a charm against misfortune.

There were found among the sultan's archives ample proof of the treasonable nature of his intentions. He had addressed to the French Republic a letter, in which he said, "If you will only support me, not a single Englishman shall be left alive in India; for the efforts which I am making will soon rouse the whole country against them." There was also discovered the list of a republican club, which a band of French democrats had formed at Seringapatam, and the president of which was a retired pirate, named Répaut. Before the gate of the palace of the greatest despot in the East, these men used to swear hatred to all sovereigns, *Citizen Tippoo alone excepted*, while they hoisted the *bonnet rouge* upon a pole in the heart of an Asiatic town, of which the inhabitants were slaves.

The occupation of Seringapatam assured to the English government an excellent *point-d'appui*, in the event of an invasion on the side of Canara or Malabar. It made over to them, also, an enormous amount of booty; for all the sultan's treasures and military stores were accumulated in his capital. There was a foundry and an arsenal, the latter containing 451 brass guns, 478 iron, 520,000 pounds of gunpowder, with 424,000 shot, &c. &c. The value of the money secured for public purposes, of the jewels, objects of *virtù*, elephants, horses, and camels, was estimated at not less than 45,580,350 star pagodas, while private plunderers—and

the whole army may be said to have plundered—made a rich harvest. ["It was impossible," says Wellesley, in a letter to his brother, "to expect, that after the labour which the troops had undergone in working up to the place, and the various successes which they had had in six different affairs with Tippoo's troops, in all of which they had come to the bayonet with them, they should not have looked to the plunder of the place. Nothing, therefore, could have exceeded what was done on the night of the 4th. Scarcely a house in the town was left unplundered; and I understand that in the camp, jewels of the greatest value, bars of gold, &c. &c., have been offered for sale in the bazaars of the army, by our soldiers, sepoys, and followers."]

Intelligence of this great success reached England almost at the same time with the news of the raising of the siege of St. Jean d'Acre. Whatever degree of apprehension had heretofore been experienced in consequence of the Egyptian expedition thus passed away. The Indian empire was rendered safe by the complete submission of the Deccan and of Mysore, and it rested henceforth with the home authorities to choose their own time for extending the influence of Great Britain over all the other states of the peninsula.

Seringapatam fell on the 4th, and on the 5th, Colonel Wellesley, being appointed commandant of the place, entered upon the discharge of his duties. The arrangement was felt at the moment by General Baird, and has since been spoken of by his biographer, as a slight put upon that officer. Not alone because he happened to be senior to Wellesley and had commanded during the assault, but because he had formerly been a prisoner in Seringapatam, Baird greatly desired the office;

and it was perhaps natural that he should attribute his disappointment to the direct interference of the Governor-General. But there was no foundation whatever for the notion. Lord Mornington knew nothing of General Harris's intentions till Wellesley himself communicated to him the fact of his own appointment; and in writing to the commander-in-chief about it, on the 17th of July, the Governor-General says, "You know whether you would be doing me a favour if you employed him (Colonel Wellesley) in any way that would be detrimental to the public service. But my opinion, or rather the knowledge and experience which I have had of his observation, his judgment, and his character, is such, that if you had not established him in Seringapatam, I should have done it by my own authority, because I believe that he is universally admitted to possess the necessary qualifications for such employment."

[This was perfectly true; nor could its truth be more fully known to any one than to General Harris. He had derived the greatest assistance from Colonel Wellesley's advice and active exertions during the campaign, and was therefore led, by the experience of the past, to select Wellesley for so important a charge in the future.] And the result justified the wisdom of such selection in every particular.

Wellesley's first care, after assuming the command in Seringapatam, was to put a stop to the confusion that prevailed there. About noon the same day he wrote to the general, "Send hither the provost and put him under my orders; until some of the plunderers are hanged, it is vain to expect to stop the plunder." How he used both the power intrusted to him and the instruments by which it was wielded, he himself states in a

communication to Lord Mornington on the 8th: "I came in to take the command on the morning of the 5th, and, by the greatest exertions, by hanging, flogging, &c. &c., in the course of that day, I restored order among the troops." Indeed, another short note to General Harris, written on the 6th, says, "Plunder is stopped, the fires are all extinguished, and the inhabitants are returning to their houses fast. I am now employed in burying the dead, which I hope will be completed this day, particularly if you send me all the pioneers."

His next effort was to restore confidence to the inhabitants; and in this, also, he soon succeeded. One by one fugitives returned to their homes, so that by the third day after the assault, shops and bazaars were again opened and frequented by buyers and sellers, as they used to be previously to the siege. Neither did he fail to pay to the remains of Tippoo Sultan the respect that was due to a brave man and a sovereign prince; they were laid in the same grave with those of Hyder Ali. But more important matters still remained to be considered, and to these he immediately turned his attention.

[The war had ended gloriously, but it did not appear that the victors had quite made up their minds what to do with the conquered country. The Nizam and the Mahrattas, after the customs of their fathers, desired to share the sultan's territories among the three allied powers. It was not the policy of the English either unnecessarily to extend the territory of their own dominions, or too much to strengthen these not very trustworthy allies; and others besides the immediate partisans of Tippoo suggested the wisdom of placing a

son of that prince on the vacant throne. It appears, too, from one of his letters to Lord Mornington, that Colonel Wellesley leaned at one time to this device, provided the bolder measure of retaining Seringapatam, with the sea-coast line and an open communication with the Carnatic, should be objected to. But further consideration led the Governor-General to determine that it would be best to gratify the Mahrattas and the Nizam by handing over to them most of the conquests which Hyder had achieved, and to re-establish in Mysore proper the representative of the Hindoo dynasty which Hyder had set aside. This was accordingly done, though subject to conditions which gave the English absolute power over the new rajah, while they provided for the maintenance, at his expense, of a subsidiary force, which should be commanded by English officers, and rendered, in point of fact, available when it might be required for English purposes.

With respect to the sons of Tippoo, the elder of whom gave in his submission a few days after the fall of the capital, they, as well as the leading men among his nobles, were provided for in a very generous manner. The nobles, on acceding to the new government, were confirmed in their jaghires, and one of them, by name Purneah, became Dewan, or prime-minister, to the infant rajah. The sons of Tippoo were pensioned, residences being assigned to them at Vellore. And now began the labour of settling and restoring order to the country. It was beset with no common difficulty, for besides that unsuccessful war in the east never fails to dislocate the whole order of society, there were various forts in Mysore, and among them Chettledoorg, which had not yet given in their submission, and which it would have

been both tedious and expensive to reduce by force of arms. Colonel Wellesley was required to undertake the task, and with his accustomed energy he set about its accomplishment. His own head-quarters he established in Seringapatam, and applied himself immediately to rebuild both the old and the new town. He repaired the works of the fortress. He set up courts of justice for the trial of civil offences, in which cazis, mooftis, and pundits, were appointed to act as assessors to the European magistrate. For the repression of crime, he had courts-martial constantly sitting, and he organised an excellent police. Meanwhile, by judicious management, he caused all the forts, including Chettledoorg, to submit to the detachments which he sent out to take them over; and, finally, he drew up a plan for the military defence of the country in which there occur these memorable expressions: "It is impossible to accomplish what we seek, by relying, as we have heretofore done, on weak garrisons scattered through the country. That system must be changed; for neither the new nor the old territory can be held by troops dispersed among fortresses, not one of which can be abandoned without danger. What I recommend is, that we place garrisons in those forts only which are indispensable to us, and keep always in the field two or three European regiments, the whole of the cavalry, and as strong a force of native infantry as we can get together." In endeavouring to impress these views upon others, Wellesley showed that he already entertained, on the subject of the military occupation of India, opinions more sound than had then, or have subsequently, been held by any civil or military ruler, of the destinies of that great empire.]

We defy any one to read the voluminous correspondence of this great man without being struck not less with the maturity of his judgment than with his marvellous forethought at every period in his career. He was already to the full as much of a statesman as of a soldier. He deals as freely with the management of civil as with the administration of military affairs, and the discretionary powers with which he was invested enabled him to acquire an amount of experience which developed and refined his natural aptitude in the most remarkable manner. Nor is it less worthy of observation, that able, active, and rigid as he was, he never ceased to be popular, except with such as evaded or violated their duty. His disposition, firm yet conciliatory, his justice, good humour, and respect for established usages, and even for objects consecrated by their association with the religions of the country, won for him the esteem and confidence of all, and especially of the Mahomedan population.

The following fact will show in what spirit the affairs of the government were conducted. Wellesley had established his residence in the palace of Dowlat, on one of the walls of which there were paintings, descriptive of different episodes in the defeat of Colonel Bailey. Though necessarily calling to mind a severe check which the British arms had met, as well as the horrible tortures inflicted by the sultan on the brave officers whom he made prisoners on that occasion, Wellesley thought it right to respect these pictures, and even went so far as to cause one of them to be repaired at his own expense. The Governor-General hastened to mark his approval of this generous and liberal policy. In one of his letters, dated the 6th of June, 1800, he writes to

Sir Arthur, "Your conduct in Mysore has gained you great credit, and assured your advancement in after life."

[It must not be supposed, however, that all these labours were undertaken and carried through without exposing the individual engaged in them to many grave personal inconveniences. He seems never quite to have surmounted the feeling which caused his original appointment to be regarded as an act of favouritism; and some of the officers employed under him worked unwillingly. One of these, the engineer whose duty it was to repair the walls of Seringapatam and restore the bridge, he was obliged, after repeated remonstrances, to report to head-quarters. From a still more serious difficulty, the being associated in his management of the province with a civil commissioner, and especially with the gentleman who had been attached to the Nizam's Contingent during the campaign, he escaped only by refusing, point blank, to submit to any such alliance. "I do not mean," he writes to Lord Mornington so early as the 8th of May, "to insinuate that ——— and I are not upon the very best terms; but what I mean is, that upon one or two occasions he sent me orders which he said came from Meer Alum, and which never could have entered his head except from his own suggestion, and which, if I had obeyed, I should have probably lost part of the detachment. This is, of course, between ourselves. I intend to ask to be brought away with the army if any civil servant of the Company is to be here, or any person with civil authority who is not under my orders; for I know that the whole is a system of job and corruption from beginning to end, of which I and my troops would be made the instruments." He

was likewise mixed up more than he desired to be in questions relating to prize money; for General Harris had rashly promised the whole of the booty taken in the town to the troops, and the government seemed averse, at one time, to redeem the pledge. On this occasion Wellesley pleaded for his comrades in arms, and not unsuccessfully; for a compromise was effected, Lord Mornington alone, to his great honour, refusing to accept the 100,000*l.* which the Court of Directors assigned to him as his portion of the spoil. Lastly, it appears that while some of his brother officers were envying him the pecuniary advantages which he was supposed to enjoy, Wellesley suffered what were to him extreme embarrassments. "Since I went into the field," he says in a letter to Lord Mornington of the 14th June, "in December last, I have commanded an army with a large staff attached to me, which has not been unattended by a very great expense, especially latterly. About six weeks ago I was sent in here with a garrison, consisting of about half the army and a large staff, and I have not received one shilling more than I did in Fort St. George. The consequence is that I am ruined. . . . . I should be ashamed of doing any of the dirty things that I am told are done in some of the commands in the Carnatic, as I believe I proved sufficiently at Wallajah Nuggur. But if government do not consider my situation here, I shall be ruined for ever." And yet the very man who thus speaks of the inadequacy of the pay and allowances which he is receiving, rejoices in the prospect of being able, by means of his prize money, to liquidate a debt, even though it be owing to his brother. "My share of the prize money," he says, "amounting in jewels to about 3000 pagodas,

and in money to 7000*l.*, will enable me to pay the money which you advanced to purchase my lieutenant-colonelcy, and that which was borrowed from Captain Stapleton on our joint bond." A noble sentiment, which was met in the same generous spirit by him to whom the proposal was made; for on the 19th Lord Mornington writes in reply, "To your letter of the 14th I answer, that no consideration can induce me to accept payment of the sums which I formerly advanced for you. I am in no want of money, and probably never shall be; when I am, it will be time enough to call upon you."]

Late in August, General Harris, with a large portion of the force recently employed in the war with Tippoo, withdrew into the Carnatic. The command in Mysore was then formally assumed by Wellesley, whose attention was soon drawn to the movements of one of those warlike adventurers who seem to have abounded at all periods of its history in the east. This man, Dhoondiah Waugh by name, had been originally a freebooter, whom Tippoo surprised, defeated, and cast into prison; and who, with many other captives, regained his liberty on the fall of Seringapatam to the English. Active and bold, he soon succeeded in gathering about him one of those nomadic hosts which in India succeed, from time to time, in revolutionising the most powerful states. It was made up of the remains of Tippoo's broken army, and of soldiers discharged from all the native corps which the English had refused to keep on foot in the newly acquired provinces.

[At first Dhoondiah was heard of as coquetting with Tippoo's sons, whose removal to Vellore had not yet been effected. By and by he appeared to be entering

into relations with some of the Mahratta states, who certainly afforded him shelter.] He next fell upon the rich districts of Bednore, which he plundered, and then, after sustaining various defeats from Colonels Stevenson and Dalrymple, retired again across the Mahratta frontier. The English, of course, were unable to follow him thither, and the Mahrattas themselves, whether well disposed to him in their hearts, or acted upon by the claims of hospitality, abstained from molesting him. But no sooner was he found again on neutral territory than a detachment from the army of the Peishwah fell upon his camp and dispersed it. This was in 1799; but in the spring of 1800, Dhoondiah again recruited his bands, made himself master of several fortresses, and boldly unfurled the standard of revolt. Upwards of 40,000 vagabonds, attracted by the prospect of booty, declared for him; and as an example of this sort might soon become contagious in a country where insurrections are very easily excited, Wellesley, early in May, demanded authority from his brother to march against Dhoondiah, and to pursue him, if necessary, into the Mahratta territory.

Lord Mornington agreed to the suggestion, and all the disposable troops of Mysore were in consequence directed to assemble upon the Toombudra. Considerable preparations were, however, necessary, not merely for passing the river, but for beginning and carrying on with vigour and effect the sort of campaign which would follow; for it was no easy matter to overtake and drive from their positions swarms of marauders to whom common difficulties presented no obstacles, whose knowledge of the country was perfect, and who,

shifting their ground with extreme rapidity, had no scruple about measures which the laws of war interdict to the armies of civilised nations. He was busily engaged in forwarding these preparations, and had before him the prospect of a struggle sure to be attended by fatigue and suffering, yet of very doubtful issue, when a native introduced himself to Wellesley, and offered to bring the whole matter to a close by a stroke of his poniard. The proposal was rejected at once. "To offer a reward," he says, "in a public proclamation for a man's head, and to make a private bargain to kill him, are two very different things. An officer in command of troops may do the one, but he is bound to abstain from the other."

Meanwhile Dhoondiah was pursuing the course which had conducted Hyder Ali to power and fortune; his followers increased in numbers daily, and a recent success over a corps of Mahratta cavalry had greatly raised their confidence. He assumed the title of "King of the World," and believed, or persuaded others to believe, that he was destined to expel the English from India. Wellesley, however, with a body of light infantry, two regiments of English dragoons, and two of native cavalry, was preparing to cut short the ambitious career of this aspiring potentate. He quitted the banks of the Toombudra on the 26th June, and on the following day carried the fortress of Bednore by assault. The garrison, consisting of about five hundred men, was put to the sword; and one by one, Hoondgul, Dummul, and other fortified places fell in like manner. As the English went on, moreover, they were joined by small bodies of Mahrattas, whom the brigands had cruelly misused, while fatigue and desertion thinned Dhoondiah's ranks from

day to day. Yet such was the celerity with which the latter marched, that though followed on three separate lines by three separate columns—one under Wellesley, another under Stevenson, and a third under Bowser, they could not be overtaken.

Wellesley moved all this while with a degree of rapidity of which there had been no previous example in India. His troops made from twenty-five to thirty miles a day under a burning sun, and through a succession of arid and sandy plains. But the enemy retreated with not less celerity on his approach, and appeared determined to protract the war to the uttermost. The one sought only to avoid an action—the other endeavoured to force it on, and left no means untried which the nature of the country could afford to surprise and destroy his adversary.

On the 29th July, Wellesley received information that the main body of the enemy were at a place called Manowley, a small fort on the Malpoorba. He pushed towards it with his cavalry alone, and on the following day threw himself upon the brigands, and drove them into the river. About 5000 men, under the command of one of Dhoondiah's lieutenants, were present in that affair, and lost an elephant and several camels, with the whole of the women and children. But their guns they had sent in good time to the other side of the river. Early next morning, however, though the stream was swollen and rapid, Wellesley directed a few English soldiers to swim across, who, finding a small country boat on the opposite bank, put the guns singly on board of it, and brought them over. These guns Wellesley presented to the Mahratta corps which accompanied him. The fort had been abandoned, and the enemy were in full retreat.

The fatigue which his troops had undergone, combined with the approach of night, prevented Wellesley from following up the brigands immediately after the battle. He returned, therefore, next day to camp, where, after picking up his baggage, his *matériel*, and the rest of his force, he put himself in motion towards the Malpoorba; he crossed it on the 3rd of September, and a few days subsequently entered the Nizam's territories.

By this time Dhoondiah was reduced to great extremities, and Wellesley, eager to put an end to the campaign, pressed him hard. Indeed for some time it had been a sort of race between them, and on the 10th Wellesley gained his end. He came up with Dhoondiah, who had received false intelligence as to his vicinity, and, though Stevenson was far in the rear, determined to attack at once. It was an affair of cavalry on both sides, Wellesley being at the head of his four weak regiments, while Dhoondiah had about 5000 horse under his command. The position of the latter too was a strong one, for his left was protected by the village and rock of Conahgull, and his numbers exceeded those of the pursuers by four to one. Still the opportunity was too favourable to be allowed to pass, and Wellesley, forming his people into a single line, gave the word to charge. Nothing could withstand the impetuosity of the onset; the enemy were broken, dispersed, and pursued with great slaughter for several miles across the country.

This brilliant charge was led by Colonel Wellesley in person, and among the dead was found the body of Dhoondiah, whom the soldiers dragged in triumph into camp upon a gun-carriage. His young son was after-

wards discovered in one of the baggage-waggons, and Wellesley not only received the boy with great kindness on the field, but charged himself with the duty of providing for him a suitable education, and did not cease to watch over his interests even after he himself had quitted India.

The happy success of this enterprise added much to Wellesley's reputation as an officer brave in battle and firm of purpose. It told, moreover, doubly in his favour, that so early as the month of May Lord Mornington had proposed to him to take command of a body of troops whom it was then proposed to employ, with Admiral Rainier, against the island of Batavia. Now such a command would have been, in a pecuniary point of view, very advantageous to Wellesley; and for this, among other reasons, that the King had himself proposed the measure to Lord Mornington,—Wellesley would have been particularly gratified in taking part in it. But duty weighed then, as it always did with him, above every other consideration. He was in the midst of his preparations for the campaign, and felt that before arriving at any conclusion it would be right to consult Lord Clive, under whose immediate orders he was. Now Lord Clive knew his value, especially at such a moment; he therefore wrote to Lord Mornington entreating that Wellesley should not be withdrawn; and as Colonel Clive, the British resident at the Rajah's court, held the same language, neither Lord Mornington nor his brethren urged the subject further. Colonel Wellesley went on with his arrangements for the pacification of Mysore, and the results were in every point of view satisfactory.

Meanwhile, the alarm which the French expedition

into Egypt had awakened was not entirely calmed down. It was known that this expedition, the most useful which France ever undertook, had been planned with a view to push forward from the shores of the Red Sea, as from a base of operations, an army of 50,000 men,—to throw this army upon the Indus, and to raise in succession the native powers, whether Mahratta, Hindoo, or Mussulman,—in a word, to stir up all the oppressed nations of India. The conquest of Egypt would, besides, divert to the Mediterranean the commerce of the east, and restore to that country its ancient importance, by rendering it an entrepôt between Europe and Asia. It would assure, at the same time, to France, as a counterpoise to the supremacy of England, a colony more fertile, more pleasantly situated, more easy to be governed than Hindostan; as well as a military station, which, at the proper time, might become a base whence armies could operate against the Indian peninsula.

Justly alarmed at the influence which success in this enterprise would give to her rival, Great Britain embarked for Egypt a corps of 20,000 or 22,000 men, under the command of General Abercrombie.

The instructions given to this corps were, to proceed to the Nile, and to act in concert there, both with the Vizier's army, which was preparing to debouch from Syria, and with a body of troops which might be expected to arrive from Bombay at Cossier, on the Red Sea. The original intention was, to place the Bombay corps under the command of Colonel Wellesley, and the circumstances which led to the appointment of another officer deserve to be noticed, as in the highest degree honourable to the future hero of England.

In the month of May, 1800, about 5000 men were assembled at Trincomalee, in the island of Ceylon. The Governor-General had not made up his mind whether he should direct that corps against Batavia or against the Isle of France. While he was yet wavering as to which of these two expeditions should be undertaken, he sent his brother to Trincomalee, to concert measures with Admiral Rainier, to whom the command of the naval force had been entrusted. Wellesley reached that station in the end of December, and laboured assiduously to promote the success of the enterprise, but his colleague of the navy exhibited little of the same ardour, and the result was a letter, addressed by Wellesley on the 22nd of January to Lord Mornington, in which he says, "A month has nearly elapsed since I arrived here, but I have hitherto received no tidings of the admiral or Mr. Stokes."

It was at this juncture that the governor received such orders from the English ministry as obliged him to postpone the projected expeditions, and to send on the troops which he had collected at Trincomalee towards Egypt. He wrote immediately to inform his brother of the circumstance, who received his letter on the 6th of February. The instructions conveyed from London implied that the forts and points occupied by the French along the shores of the Red Sea were to be seized; that the natives of Upper Egypt were to be encouraged to enter the field against the common enemy; and that the movement was to be supported either by supplying them with arms and stores, or else by the co-operation with them of the whole or a part of the expeditionary force.

Wellesley saw, as soon as he read this letter, that

if these various objects were to be attained at all, it would be necessary to act with great promptitude. He conceived therefore, that he should be justified in anticipating the Governor-General's orders, by proceeding at once with the troops under his command, to Bombay. But his determination, though justified on two grounds,—first, because it was impossible to find elsewhere an adequate supply of provisions, and next, because he would be nearer to Abercrombie at Bombay than at Trincomalee, did not receive the approval either of the Governor-General or of Mr. Frederic North, the Governor of Ceylon. Indeed, the former, on the 3rd of March, wrote officially to demand from his brother specific reasons for the proceeding.

It does not appear that the reasons assigned by Wellesley were other than satisfactory to the Governor-General. On the 28th of March, his Excellency wrote again, approving of the steps which Colonel Wellesley had taken; but pointed out at the same time that the proceeding, considered in the abstract, might establish an inconvenient precedent, and so be productive of evil.

On arriving at Bombay, Sir Arthur received a letter, dated the 10th of February, in which Lord Mornington informed him that General Baird was instructed to take command of the troops. In a despatch of a later date, the Marquis, with a view to soften down this unexpected determination, permits his brother to resume the government of Mysore, if he should experience any disinclination to serve as second in command. Nevertheless, he urges him not lightly to refuse the post which had been assigned to him, and in which he would have it in his power to render great service to the State. "I

believe," says Lord Mornington, "that you will better satisfy the exigencies of public duty, and better maintain your character for public spirit by serving pleasantly and zealously in your actual position."

Wellesley's conscience told him, that he had done his duty like an intelligent soldier; nor was he at a loss where to look for the true causes of the mortification to which he had been subjected, and which was the harder to bear, because of the recollection of old differences between Baird and himself. These feelings, however, he suppressed, with the manly resolution to remain at his post, and to give every support to one, who, though not very well disposed towards him, had been honoured with the confidence of the English government. His manner of expressing himself on this occasion is both forcible and characteristic. In a letter to his brother Henry, bearing date the 23rd of March, he says, "I did not look, and did not wish, for the appointment which was given to me; and I say, that it would have probably been more proper to give it to somebody else; but when it was given to me, and a circular written to the government on this subject, it would have been but fair to let me hold it, till I did something to deserve to lose it. . . . I am not quite satisfied with the manner in which I have been treated; however, I have lost neither my health, spirits, nor temper, in consequence thereof." This was on the 23rd; on the 25th he writes again, and says, "My former letters will have shown you how much this (the arrival of Baird) will annoy me; but I have never had much value for the public spirit of any man who does not sacrifice his private views and convenience when it is necessary."

The same day on which he made this noble declara-

tion, a fever seized him, and his departure became impossible. But this circumstance served only to draw more prominently into light his disinterestedness and patriotism. He had collected a great deal of statistical and military information, with a view to the well-being of the expedition of which he was then at the head. All this he sent to General Baird, accompanied by a paper, in which were put forth with great clearness his own views and ideas as to the best means of conducting the proposed operations. Indeed, whatever chagrin may have affected him at first, his good humour was now entirely restored, and he expressed himself, on more than one occasion, pleased with General Baird's manner towards him. "I hope," he writes to his brother Henry, on the 8th of April, "that if the service goes on, matters will be conducted satisfactorily. I have been a slave to it till this moment, notwithstanding I was sick."

The doubt here expressed—and which others of his letters and papers repeat, as to the timely arrival of the expedition at the scene of action—soon received its accomplishment. Baird did not reach the shores of the Red Sea till the great blow had been struck, and his presence with Abercrombie's army served no other purpose than to hasten the surrender of Cairo, which was followed by the subsequent evacuation of Alexandria, and of the whole of Egypt.

CHAP. III.

THE MAHRATTA WAR. — HOW SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY PREPARED FOR IT. — PLAN OF CAMPAIGN. — ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEISHWAH ON THE THRONE OF POOHNA. — SIEGE OF AHMEDNUGGER. — BATTLE OF ASSAYE. — SIEGES OF BURHAMPOOR AND ASSIRGHUR. — NEGOTIATION WITH SCINDIA. — BATTLE OF ARGAUM. — SIEGE OF GAWILGHUR. — NEGOTIATIONS WITH SCINDIA AND THE RAJAH OF BERAR. — TREATIES OF PEACE. — EXPEDITION AGAINST A BODY OF BRIGANDS. — WELLESLEY ASKS LEAVE TO RETURN TO ENGLAND. — MARKS OF RESPECT AND ADMIRATION WHICH HE RECEIVED ON DEPARTURE.

WELLESLEY, recovering from his fever, returned to Seringapatam, where he waited in expectation of a coming war with the Mahrattas. That turbulent and barbarous people had, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, seized upon a large portion of the Mogul empire, which, great as it had formerly been, was beginning to fall to pieces through the incapacity of the descendants of Timour. But the same fate befell the Mahrattas which seems to be inevitable, sooner or later, to all oriental despotisms. The descents of Sivagee, the founder of the empire, became effeminate and feeble, and the substance of their power passed into the hands of the Peishwah, a sort of hereditary major-domo. There followed upon this a breaking up of what had once been one enormous state into a variety of smaller principalities. All the heads of these affected to look up to the Poonah Rajah, or rather to his minister, the Peishwah, who

made treaties in their name as well with the East India Company as with the other provinces of India.

The authority of this Peishwah, at the period of which we are speaking, had become more nominal than real. The principal chiefs of the confederation exercised indeed perfect independence, and were by no means disposed to recognise the authority of the court of Poonah. Three of these, the Rajah of Berar, Holkar, and Scindia, took high ground among the rest, and exhibited in a marked degree a jealousy of their own authority. The most formidable in every respect was, however, Dowlat Rao, the nephew of the celebrated Maadjee Scindia, who, under the pretext of submission to the Mogul emperors, had extended his authority from Agra as far as the Sutlej; that is to say, over the north-west of Hindostan. Cunning and ambitious as his predecessor, Dowlat Rao thought of nothing else than how to extend the limits of his sovereignty. In name he was a subject, in point of fact the master, of the unfortunate emperor Shah Alum. He was the professed friend and secret enemy of his rival Holkar, the apparent defender and real oppressor of the neighbouring states. He professed to be the supporter of the tottering throne of the Peishwah, and aspired only to overturn it. A nonentity upon the the testimony of Wellesley, yet gifted with rare energy, and, like all the Mahrattas, covetous of power and of fame, he aspired at nothing less than the conquest of Hindostan.

Accident brought to Ougein, in 1784, a Sardinian officer, by name Leborgne or De Boigne, who, after serving in Russia and under the East India Company, had organised in the times of Maadjee, sixteen battalions of Mahratta infantry upon the European system.

Among the adventurers admitted into this army we find Perron, a non-commissioned officer of marines, and a deserter from the fleet of Admiral Souffrein. Besides these, Dowlat Rao had 18,000 good cavalry, and 200 pieces of cannon. This army, the strongest and best organised in India, was commanded by European officers.

The Rajah of Berar was master of all the territory which stretches from the western shore of the Gulf of Bengal to the country of the Nizam. His capital was Nagpoor, and he could put in motion 20,000 disciplined cavalry, and 10,000 infantry. Holkar, the descendant of a tribe of shepherds, was the chief of a territory which lay between the states of Scindia and the Bombay Presidency. His army, composed chiefly of cavalry, numbered as many as 80,000 men. He was extremely jealous of the ascendency which Scindia exercised at Poonah. Finding an opportunity to crush that inconvenient rival, he passed the Nerbudda in 1802, and marched upon Poonah, where, on the 25th of October, he defeated the united armies of Scindia and the Peishwah. In consequence of this check, Badge Rao was compelled to abandon his capital, to seek a refuge in Bassein, and to implore the protection of the Company.

Such a combination of circumstances alone was wanting, to force upon him the adoption of a measure, from which the dread of embroiling himself with Scindia and Holkar had heretofore deterred him; and so to favour the rapid development of the British power, of which he was jealous.

The Company, freed by the evacuation of Egypt from the most serious danger which had ever menaced India, found that the moment had arrived when it would be

able, through the temporary division of its chiefs, to break up the Mahratta confederacy. From the times of Warren Hastings downwards, the wish had prevailed of establishing over that confederation an influence analogous to that which Lord Clive had exercised over the empire of the Mogul. But no such efforts had as yet been made as gave assurance of a satisfactory result. It was reserved for Lord Wellesley to achieve this long-coveted object; in defiance of the instructions of parliament, which had declared all conquests or offensive alliances with Indian princes to be contrary to the honour and policy of England. Well disposed to profit by circumstances, the governor received the fugitive Peishwah warmly, and gave him a vessel to transport him to Bombay, where an asylum was afforded him till measures could be taken to replace him on his throne. From that moment Badge Rao became the ally, or rather the instrument, of Great Britain.

On the 13th of December, 1802, this prince concluded with England the celebrated treaty of Bassein, of which the most important clause stipulated for the admission into the Peishwah's states of an English army of 6000 men. It was agreed at the same time that the Peishwah should cede to the Company a territory sufficient to maintain that corps, and pledge himself never again to make war, except with the consent of the English government; in other words, that he would submit to the Company's arbitration all the difficulties which might henceforth arise between himself and the states which were his neighbours. This treaty was indeed a master-stroke of policy. It took away from Scindia the main instrument of his power, and exposed him to the rivalry of Holkar and the English; the only

resource which remained to him was, therefore, to unite himself with the Rajah of Berar. A treaty of alliance was accordingly signed on the 10th of March, 1803, and the forces of the two chiefs proceeded to establish themselves forthwith at Bourampoor, on the Nizam's frontiers.

Scindia did not possess the military talents of Hyder Ali and Tippoo Saib, but his army was numerous, provided with a strong artillery, and with a cavalry which was well thought of throughout India. He was able besides to count on the support of the forces which the French general Perron had organised on the banks of the Jumna. That officer, though in the service of Scindia, exercised a sort of independent power, which the excellent constitution of his army rendered from day to day more formidable. He had obtained, for the maintenance of his troops, the concession of a vast territory, which extended from the Jumna across the Punjab to the Indus, and comprised Agra, Delhi, and a large portion of the Doab. The unfortunate Shah Alum was entirely in his power, and it might be apprehended that he would use his authority, in order to wring from the Great Mogul a transference to France of the rights of the house of Timour over the peninsula of India.

The army which Perron, with the help of a good many of his countrymen, had organised, numbered 30,000 infantry, and 8000 cavalry, perfectly equipped and disciplined. It possessed 290 pieces of cannon, of which 150 were brass.

It was now the beginning of 1803. Wellesley, raised during the preceding year to the rank of major-general, was placed at the head of a portion of the Indian

army, and received instructions to re-establish the authority of the Peishwah at Poonah. Generals longer in the service than he disapproved of this selection, and conceived a jealousy of him which they took no pains whatever to dissemble. But he had established a perfect right to this preference by his former exploits, by the pains which he had taken in organising his troops, and above all, by the accurate knowledge which he had acquired of the topography and resources of the country, of the character of its inhabitants, and of the plan of operations which gave the surest promise of a successful issue to the enterprise.

His aptitude for political affairs, and the ability with which he could extract truth from the midst of endless intrigues, rendered him besides, in an especial manner qualified for the wars of India, which require that men in command of armies should be not only generals, but statesmen, financiers, and diplomatists also.

The innumerable opportunities with which these wars supplied him of combating the bad faith of the native princes, and of counteracting the corruption of their ministers, the barbarism of the people, and the hatred, sometimes open sometimes concealed, which provoked the rapid development of the English power, served as an admirable preparation for the difficult part which he had afterwards to play in the Spanish peninsula.

Yet it was a fortunate thing for Wellesley that there was beside him—to give effect to his claims, and bring his brilliant qualities to light—a man so resolute and so strongly attached to the honour of his family as the illustrious Earl of Mornington. Without the support of that fraternal hand, he would have probably risen

neither so quickly nor so high. For the rest, it is beyond dispute that his noble and generous conduct soon effaced the uneasy impression that his advancement might have made; and that, on quitting India, he carried with him the esteem even of those over whose heads he had been promoted.

The first care of the young general was to consider well the political interests which were at stake in this quarrel, and the most convenient means of crushing Scindia and the Rajah of Berar, without provoking a general insurrection of the Mahratta princes. It was against this rising, indeed, that he had chiefly to guard; for all the forces at the disposal of the British Government would have been insufficient to dissolve a league so formidable. It is impossible to admire too much the judgment and perspicacity which Wellesley brought to bear upon the consideration of this matter. For a long time back he had made it the subject of his private thoughts, and of his correspondence with the local authorities. "Our object," he writes to Lord Clive, in the month of October, 1800, "appears to be to establish the legal power of the Peishwah over the Mahratta empire. In order to effect this, Scindia must be removed to his own territories. It is not to be supposed that he will relinquish all that he has been endeavouring to obtain for the last four or five years without a contest; and all the chiefs of the Mahratta empire look to the event of this expected contest with the utmost anxiety. They will join the one party or the other, according to their own ideas of their relative strength, and of the chances of ultimate success; and in case of our interference, which is not expected, the question with them will be, whether our force employed is sufficient to get

the better of that which will be brought against us by Scindia."

In January, 1801, Wellesley had drawn up a new minute upon this question, in which are set forth with great clearness, and with the authority which his experience during the pursuit of Dhoondiah entitled him to claim, the main considerations which guided him in arranging his plan for the campaign of 1803.

To overawe the Mahratta princes, whether neutral or undecided, Wellesley required that, in the first instance, at least, the Company's intervention should be supported by an imposing body of troops. He pointed out, at the same time, how necessary it was to commence the campaign at that season when the rivers were in flood, because the Indians had not the same ready means of crossing large bodies of water as the English army. Finally, his anxiety to strengthen his rear, and to hinder the petty Mahratta princes from coalescing with Scindia and the Rajah of Berar, induced him to recommend certain precautions, to which circumstances gave importance, and which a general less able or less prudent would have despised. We see him, in this instance, as he appears throughout the whole of his life — a judicious observer, who takes account of the smallest difficulties, and seeks by the force of prudence and talent to range upon his side chances which others leave entirely to the guidance of accident or fortune.

The plan of the Governor-General was as extensive as it was bold. In the north, General Lake was directed, with 14,000 men, to attack Delhi and Perron's corps. In the south, Wellesley, with 23,000, received orders to assail upon the Nerbudda the troops of Scindia and the Rajah of Berar. The division of Bombay, about 7000

strong, was to operate by Surat and Baroda, towards the north-west, while, from the opposite side, that of General Harcourt, setting out from Calcutta, should seize the rich province of Cuttack, belonging to the Rajah of Berar, and in which stood the famous temple of Juggernaut, the object of such extraordinary veneration to the Hindoos. Three corps of reserve were besides directed to cover the possessions of the English and their allies. One was charged with the protection of Poonah and the Peishwah. Another was to take up a position upon the Kistna, for the defence of the Deccan; and the third to establish itself upon Mirzapoor and Benares, in order to defend the valley of the Ganges. M. Petit de Baroncourt observes, with reason, that this dissemination of force, however adequate to overawe Hindoos, would have brought ruin upon the English troops if they had had to do with chiefs of experience.

During the first days of March, 1803, Wellesley proceeded with 10,617 men, of whom 1709 were cavalry, to form a junction with the Company's troops in the pay of the Nizam, and with those of the Peishwah concentrated along the eastern frontier. He marched with his little army two hundred leagues through the Mahratta districts, not only without opposition on their part, but receiving from them all the supplies which the country could afford. On the 15th of April he fell in with the army of the Nizam, and three days afterwards was informed by Lieutenant Close, the Company's resident at Poonah, that Amrat Rao intended to burn the city on retiring from it. "Sir Arthur," says M. Barchou de Penhoën, "displayed on that occasion the activity for which he never ceased to be remarkable. He took with him his cavalry alone (less than 400

men), made a night-march across a difficult country, compassed not less than sixty miles in thirty hours, and arrived on the 20th, unexpectedly, under the walls of Poonah." That rapid march saved the place from imminent destruction, and the people, grateful for the good act, received the English as liberators. Wellesley took possession of the city, and sent Colonel Stevenson, with the auxiliary forces of the Nizam, as far as Seenah, in order that he might at once have it in his power to defend the states of the Soubah of the Deccan, and give support, in case of need, to the division stationed at Poonah. That division, commanded by Wellesley in person, was obliged, in conformity with the treaty of Bassein, to wait for the Peishwah Badge Rao, and re-establish him on the throne of the Mahrattas.

Badge Rao arrived on the 12th of May, and immediately assumed the reins of government. The necessity of regulating certain important points detained Wellesley at Poonah till the 4th of the month following. The same day Stevenson crossed the Godavery, and the two armies, separated one from the other, moved in the direction of Aurungabad. In spite of the signal services which they had rendered to the Peishwah, they were not long in experiencing the effects of the indolence and duplicity of that prince, who, after having solicited their support, was not ashamed to leave them to themselves, without provisions and without resources, at a distance of 1100 miles from their depôts. "We have not as yet," writes their chief, "received from the Peishwah the slightest assistance. The Peishwah's people are ready enough with their promises, but very cautious when called upon to fulfil them. There is abundance in the country, but it is all hid away, and, in spite of

the prices which we offer, we can get nothing but what we carry with us; in fact, we should be much better off in an enemy's country. The entire want of power and authority in our allies, the Peishwah and the Soubah of the Deccan, are the chief difficulties with which we shall have to contend throughout this war. Every killadar and chief of a village, or a district, does exactly what he pleases."

This state of things exercised an uncomfortable influence upon the temper of the Mahratta chiefs, who waited to declare in favour of which ever party appeared to be the strongest. "Those of the south," writes Wellesley, "are all the enemies, open or secret, of the Peishwah, and the confederates urge them vehemently to join them. We cannot conceal from ourselves that our cause in this war is not very popular with those who direct the councils and the conduct of these chiefs, and that each of them is strongly urged, by every motive of national and family pride, to oppose himself to the English government in a war which must necessarily overturn the national power of the Mahrattas."

Meanwhile Wellesley had not renounced the hope of being able to arrange matters by means of negotiation; and it is certainly a circumstance remarkable in the life of the English hero that he should have been anxious on all occasions to avoid an appeal to arms, to which his tastes, his inclinations, and, above all, his interests, would have led him.

"I am confident," he says, "that our resources will not be found insufficient for this war; yet it is our duty to the country to avoid it, if we can do so with honour, and I hope that by taking measures in good time we shall accomplish our object."

Scindia, however, had no desire to make peace. His hostility to the treaty of Bassein and to the English policy was stronger than his friendship for the Peishwah and his hatred to Holkar. Separating himself from the former of these chiefs and making advances towards an alliance with the latter, he proceeded to take up with his own troops, and with those of the Rajah of Berar, a menacing position upon the frontiers of the Deccan. The Governor-General required him to abandon that position with as little delay as possible. But Scindia, without taking any notice of the order, made a profession of his good intentions, evidently seeking to gain time that he might organise his forces and defer hostilities till all the Indian rivers should have subsided. When the English general obtained proof of this fact, he commanded Scindia to quit the Nizam's frontier, and withdraw within his ordinary cantonments. But to this command the Mahratta chief insolently replied that he should not withdraw until the English army had returned to Seringapatam, Madras, and Bombay. There was no more room to negotiate after such a declaration, and Wellesley wrote in consequence, "I have offered you peace on conditions just and honourable to both parties. You have chosen war, and you shall undergo all its calamities."

The ample powers which Wellesley had received from his brother enabled him to hold this language. He was required only to conform to the general views of the government, and to make Lake aware of all which he had determined to do. Lord Mornington, in conferring upon him this discretionary power, writes thus: "Your well known ability, your zeal, your character and judgment, joined to great local experience, the influence which

you have established, and your high reputation among the chiefs of the Mahratta states, as well as your intimate knowledge of my views and opinions in regard to British interests in the Mahrattâ empire, have determined me to invest you with these important and delicate powers."

The Governor-General, however anxious he might be to negotiate with the Mahratta princes, and to absorb them by treaties of alliance, had been prepared for a long while to crush them, if necessary, by a vigorous blow. At the period at which we have arrived, all his measures were taken to effect that object. Twenty thousand men found themselves concentrated in the kingdom of Oude, and Lord Lake had taken the command. His instructions directed him to attack Perron, on the banks of the Jumna, to take possession of Delhi and Agra, as well as of the person of Shah Alum, and then to form alliances with the Rajpoots and other princes on the further side of the Jumna. Thus would Southern India be closed against Scindia, while decisive blows should be struck at the centre of the enemy's forces.

The business intrusted to Wellesley was to give employment to Scindia and the Rajah of Berar by attacking them vigorously on the Nizam's frontier. Finally, Colonel Campbell had it in charge to direct a secondary operation against the province of Cuttack and the city of Juggernaut, the possession of which was greatly desired by the Company.

On the 7th of August, General Lake quitted Cawnpore, with about 14,000 men. On the 28th, Perron proposed an arrangement, by virtue of which his troops should remain neutral during the war; but forasmuch as there

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was nothing which England desired more than the complete destruction of the French general's half European army, Lake rejected the proposal. Next day he found the enemy occupying a strong position in advance of the fort of Allighur, the ordinary residence of Perron. That general, after a good while spent in secret conferences with the English, defended himself feebly. His troops were beaten, and immediately the siege works began. Perron signed a special convention with General Lake, and forthwith retired to Chandernagore, where he embarked for France, carrying with him enormous wealth which he had amassed in the service of the Mahrattas.

His successor, Louis Bourquien, a Frenchman also by birth, continued to face the English with numerous forces and an imposing artillery. But his army, cowed by Perron's treason, was, on the 11th of September, 1803, defeated in a strong position, in front of Delhi, by 5000 of the Company's troops; 3000 Indians, sixty-eight pieces of cannon, and eleven standards remained upon the field of battle. The loss of the English, notwithstanding the short duration of the struggle, amounted to 400 men, killed and wounded.

It was the immediate result of this action that Delhi, the ancient capital of Hindostan, passed into the power of the Company. Shah Alum, delivered from French influence and the Mahratta yoke, was again seated on the throne, and solemnly recognised by England, who found it more to her interest to bolster up the prestige and vain authority of that prince than completely to overturn it.

Louis, and the greater part of the officers under his command, entered into a treaty with General Lake; and

their unfortunate army, deprived of its chiefs, retreated upon Agra, where, on the 10th of October, it was again beaten, and entirely dispersed. The same day the English penetrated into the city, and laid siege to the castle. The trenches were advanced rapidly. On the 17th, the breaches were declared to be practicable, and the garrison, about 6000 strong, surrendered at discretion. There were found within the place, a depôt of stores, 164 pieces of cannon, (among which was one gun of a gigantic size, well known throughout all India,) and treasure to the amount of £280,000 sterling.

These rapid successes struck with terror most of the princes of Northern India. Scindia, however, did not lose courage, and fourteen of his best battalions joined the wreck of Perron's army, in order to renew the struggle. General Lake, with his cavalry and light infantry, set out on the 27th of October, in pursuit of these troops, and came up with them on the 1st of November, near the village of Laswarrie. At his approach the enemy began to retreat; whereupon Lake, apprehensive of some demonstration in his rear, determined to attack them immediately, even though he had his cavalry alone in hand, and the Mahratta forces, amounting to 16,000 men, were supported by seventy pieces of cannon.

This powerful artillery covered the whole front of the line of battle. Yet the long grass and a cloud of dust had prevented Lake from seeing them; insomuch that he advanced against them as if they had not been there. A furious cannonade overwhelmed his squadrons and compelled them to retire. Happily for him, at this critical moment, the Mahratta chiefs demanded a brief suspension of hostilities, to which he readily agreed.

Meanwhile, the main army had come up, which enabled him to recommence the attack with better prospects. This time, perfect success crowned his efforts; the battle, long uncertain, was gained at last by the valour and obstinacy of the English sepoys, who had never, on any previous occasion, performed such brilliant service.

The Mahrattas left upon the field of battle 5000 killed and wounded, 2000 prisoners, seventy guns, and forty-five standards, with the whole of their baggage and stores. The loss on the other side, in spite of the obstinacy of the struggle, did not exceed 800 men placed *hors de combat.*

This victory gave a mortal blow to the power of Scindia in the southern provinces. On the eastern side, Colonel Harcourt, the successor of Campbell, who had fallen sick, overran without difficulty, the province of Cuttack. Wellesley was not less fortunate in the western provinces, where he had an affair with the Rajah of Berar and Scindia in person. His plan was to attack Ahmednugger, and to render secure, by the capture of that place, his communications with Poonah and Bombay; then, leaving the army of the Nizam to cover the frontier of the Peishwah's states, to force the enemy to a general action. The fortifications of Ahmednugger consisted of a feeble wall without parapets. A wide space separated what the Indians call a Pettah from the fort of Ahmednugger, in which was a palace of Scindia, with a good many valuables belonging to that chief. The siege began on the 8th of August, and the same day Wellesley took the Pettah which defended the approach to the fort by storm. That operation cost him a hundred and fifty men killed and wounded.

One of his biographers asserts, that in order to avoid escalading in succession all the fortified places at which he might arrive, as well as with a view to impress the Mahrattas with a wholesome dread of English troops, Wellesley had given instructions to put to the sword, in case of a vigorous resistance, the defenders of the first fort which he should carry. We have not been able to discover the slightest trace of this order: nevertheless, a document, published by Colonel Welsh, himself an eye-witness of the capture of Ahmednugger —seems to vouch for its existence. It is a letter written by Gooklah, a Mahratta chief, to one of his friends in Poonah, after the assault of the Pettah. "The English," says he, "are a strange people, and their general, an extraordinary man; they arrived here in the morning, examined the walls, carried them, have killed all the garrison of the place, and are now gone back to breakfast. Who can resist such men as these?" Ground was broken before the fort on the 9th, three days afterwards the ramparts were breached, and the garrison reduced to capitulate. It consisted of 1400 men. According to their custom, the English set themselves to pillage; but Wellesley put a stop to the disorder by causing a few plunderers to be hung at the very gate of Scindia's palace.

The taking of Ahmednugger assured to the British army an excellent *place de depôt*. It facilitated at the same time their operations in the north, covered Poonah and the western provinces of the Nizam, rendered the English masters of the territories of Scindia to the south of the Godavery, and finally interposed an obstacle to the junction of the Mahratta chiefs with the princes of Southern India. These latter entertained

such an exalted opinion of the strength of Ahmednugger that the loss of that place sufficed to insure their neutrality. It was the principal advantage which Wellesley was desirous of achieving, in order to secure the success of his enterprise.

Six days after the surrender of the fort, Wellesley put himself in march to join Stevenson. His division passed the Godavery on the 24th of August, and on the 29th entered, without resistance, the noble city of Aurungabad, having seized, during its progress, two convoys destined for the enemy's army. The result of this march was to stop an offensive movement which Scindia was desirous of directing against Hyderabad.

During the night of the 17th of September, Wellesley surprised and put to the route a considerable detachment of the enemy. Five days previously, Stevenson had carried Jalna, a fort of some importance on the Mahratta frontier, and almost at the same time, Colonel Woodington, operating from the Bombay side, had made himself master of the district of Baroach.

Being rejoined by Stevenson at Budnapore on the 21st of September, Wellesley made his dispositions to attack the enemy on the following day. It was arranged that Stevenson should fall upon the right of the position, which was defended by infantry, and that the commander-in-chief should attack the left, where the cavalry was posted. The two corps separated in consequence, that they might turn the mountains beyond which Scindia had taken post, the one towards the west, the other towards the east.

Wellesley, trusting to the reports which he had received, calculated that the left of the enemy would be appuied upon the village of Bokerdun. He found, on

the contrary, that the right was assembled there, and that the left occupied the post of Assaye. The consequence was, that instead of being, as he expected on the 23rd, at a distance of four or five leagues from the enemy, his division was separated from them by six or seven miles only. However serious this mistake might be, it had no effect upon the English general, who decided upon the moment to act with vigour. As he expected nothing more than an affair of cavalry, he placed his baggage in a position of security, and moved on briskly to the attack. But scarcely had he deployed his troops ere he discovered that he had the whole Mahratta army before him; — about 50,000 men drawn up in an admirable position, which was covered in front by the Kaitna, and defended by 128 pieces of cannon. To retire with his division in the presence of Scindia's numerous cavalry would be to run the risk of total destruction, and at all events to compromise his baggage, of the situation of which the enemy was still ignorant. To wait the arrival of Stevenson would be to put off the affair till the morrow, and to lose, according to all appearance, the opportunity of destroying the Mahratta army, and of bringing the war to a rapid conclusion. On the other hand, to risk a battle against such considerable forces with 8000 men, of whom 1500 only were Europeans, and with but seventeen guns, drawn by animals exhausted with fatigue, was to adopt a measure of no common hardihood. Indeed, as Wellesley himself expressed it in a letter of the 21st to Colonel Munro, "It was a desperate expedient." Nevertheless this resolution, powerfully and vigorously executed, might lead to important results, and find its justification in the exceptional circumstances in which

the English army was placed. The commander-in-chief was not slow in deciding.

A rapid survey of the enemy's position convinced Wellesley that the attack ought to be directed against the left. In making a reconnoisance on that side, he discovered, as he had expected, an undefended ford, near an old fortress, called Pepulgaon. His principal column was immediately directed towards that point, with orders to overwhelm the enemy's left. Protected in rear by the English cavalry, and on its right flank by that of the Mahrattas and of Mysore, this column attacked the village under a frightful storm of projectiles with a steadiness and courage exceeding all praise. "The troops," says Mons. Barchou de Penhoën, "marched in good order, and preserved their distances with as much regularity as if at a review. The coolness and self-possession of that handful of men struck the Mahrattas with astonishment."

Wellesley's weak artillery was soon silenced, and compelled to take its place in the rear of the column; but that circumstance did not restrain the ardour of the English infantry, which threw itself, with the bayonet, on the enemy's line. Perfect success attended that heroic effort. Scindia's cavalry, which menaced their flank and rear, was kept at a distance; his artillerymen, whose well-directed fire had wrought so much mischief, abandoned their guns — and the infantry, three or four times more numerous than that of the attacking line, was forced to retreat. The sepoys pursued the fugitives with an ardour which was attended with mischievous consequences. A great number of Mahrattas had taken shelter under the guns— others pretended to be dead. Scarcely had the sepoys

LL Second position of Scindiah.
OO Last position of Scindiah.

passed them, when they sprang up, and turned their pieces against the assailants. This cannonade encouraged several of the enemy's corps to halt and face about; while Scindia's cavalry, which had hung in masses near the English troops, showed themselves again a little distance off.

The battle was renewed at various points, and the situation of the victorious army — scattered in pursuit — became very critical. Wellesley saw the danger, and, in order to avert it, threw himself immediately, with the 78th of the line, and the 7th Native Cavalry, among the rallied troops. That murderous charge rendered him a second time master of the Mahratta artillery, and of the whole field of battle. The horse which he rode was killed by a cannon-shot — it was the second which he lost during the affair. Never before had he exhibited greater personal gallantry. Shortly before the final charge Colonel Maxwell was slain while attacking, at the head of his brigade, a column of fugitives which had rallied.

Ninety-eight guns, with all Scindia's stores, fell into the hands of the conquerors. There were about 1200 men killed upon the spot, and 800 in the pursuit. The wounded, according to the testimony of Wellesley, covered the whole face of the country; indeed, it appeared that the number did not fall short of 6000. The artillerists were almost all cut to pieces beside their guns, and entire ranks of soldiers were found stretched upon the earth.

The enemy would have experienced a still greater loss but for a mistake committed by the 74th, in commencing the attack on the village too soon; a mistake which not only cost the English many valuable lives,

but forced the general to compromise his cavalry in order to disengage his infantry. It resulted from this accident that, at the end of the day, the horses were not in a condition to follow up the beaten enemy. The loss of the English amounted to 44 officers and 365 men killed; 126 officers and 1841 men wounded. This loss, compared with the total strength of the army, shows that a more murderous battle had never been fought in India. It is generally believed that Wellesley had, at the battle of Assaye, only 4500 men (1600 cavalry, and 2900 infantry), and that out of this effective force, one-third only, or 1500, were English. MM. Barchou de Penhoën, Jomini, and other historians, have adopted these figures. Alison, on the other hand, estimates Wellesley's strength at 8000 men present under arms. As Gurwood, in the official despatches, is silent on the subject, it is difficult to say which of these two calculations ought to be preferred. We incline, however, to the latter, for this reason, that in the month of August the effective strength of Wellesley's division appears, by an official statement, to have reached 8903 men, while, in a letter addressed on the 1st of November to Colonel Munro, Wellesley affirms that Stevenson's division was of equal if not superior strength with his own. Now that division, which, according to the official documents in the Adjutant-General's Office, numbered in the month of August 7920 men, could not have been sensibly reduced on the 1st of November, inasmuch as up to that date it had never been brought into action. It is possible, besides, that the authors who have pronounced with such unanimity for the figure of 4500 men, may have taken account only of the troops actually engaged.

The battle was won by the infantry regiments, which attacked the village with the bayonet. The English cavalry played but a secondary part in the action, and that of the Mahrattas and of the Rajah of Mysore were, so to speak, useless. It may be affirmed that the troops of Scindia fought on that day as ten against one; and it is a fact without example in history, that a third part at least of the English army remained upon the field of battle. "Never," says Southey, "was a battle gained against such enormous odds. The enemy had ten times as many combatants in the field as the English; his troops, disciplined and commanded by European officers, were twice as numerous as those of the British army; and his artillery, served with the greatest coolness, proved so superior, that at the first discharge it silenced the whole of Wellesley's pieces."

The commander-in-chief considered himself very fortunate in the result, though the darkness of the night and the exhaustion of his cavalry hindered him from turning his victory to its full account. "This battle," says he, "was the most obstinate that I have ever seen, and which I believe has ever been fought in India. The enemy's cannonade was frightful. . . . . I have no language strong enough to express the admirable conduct of the troops. They moved in the best order and with the greatest steadiness under the most murderous fire."

Some authors pretend that Scindia's infantry betrayed their chief during the battle, and gave by that means an easy victory to the English. They even add that Wellesley was made aware beforehand of their design, and that his resolution to attack on the 23rd was therefore the most natural arrangement in the world.

But there exists nothing to justify this assertion; neither official documents nor the narratives of military men, whose situation gave them the best opportunity of being well informed, take the smallest notice of it. General Wellesley, whose veracity cannot be questioned, and who in his correspondence carries frankness so far as to reveal errors with which nobody would have thought of charging him, asserts that Scindia's infantry fought well and defended its cannon to the last extremity. The cavalry, of which the organisation was defective, did its duty with less determination, but it did not desert. Moreover, the renewal of hostilities after the capture of the guns, the charges of Wellesley and of Maxwell upon the rallied troops of the Mahrattas, and still more, the number of killed and wounded on both sides, prove distinctly that on that day there was neither treachery nor panic. "The resistance of the Mahrattas," says a French author, "was heroic; their gunners died beside their guns, and whole corps of infantry suffered themselves to be cut to pieces at the posts which had been assigned them, without withdrawing one step." If the cavalry had possessed the qualities of the two other arms, and, above all, if the enemy had not left unguarded upon their flank one of the fords of the Kaitna, Wellesley's little army would have been destroyed.

It was an inspiration of the greatest hardihood, by no means a calculation founded upon the treachery or weakness of the enemy, which induced the English general to engage a force ten times as great as his own, and covered in its front by an important river. The battle of Assaye will always be regarded as one of the boldest enterprises of that general whom certain authors

represent as endowed only with the qualities which are necessary for defensive warfare.

Next day the victorious army was joined upon the field of battle by Stevenson's division. This last, about 8000 men, pursued for some time the scattered fragments of Scindia's force, after which, retracing its steps, it laid siege to Burhampoor and Assirghur. Wellesley undertook to cover these sieges, to secure the march of convoys, and to protect at the same time the states of the Nizam and of the Peishwah. All these operations succeeded completely, thanks to the vigilance of the generals, and to the rapidity with which they executed their movements. Yet the troops were beginning to suffer from the fatigue and privations to which such bold proceedings exposed them; the military chest was empty, and the native chiefs made no efforts to replenish it; provisions also began to fail. Indeed, without the help of the Brinjarries*, whom Wellesley contrived at this critical moment to attach to himself, the operations would have been interrupted through lack of grain, and of animals, and means of transport. "The Nizam's people," he writes the day after the battle of Assaye, "are behaving very ill, and his governor of Dowlatabad has refused to receive my wounded. See how our best arrangements are marred! and yet these people call themselves our good allies."

Five weeks subsequently Sir Arthur renews these complaints, and is subjected to the same inconvenience. "These exertions," he writes, "cannot last; and yet if they are relaxed, such is the total absence of all government and means of defence in this country, that it must

* A sort of travelling grain-merchants.

fall. It makes me sick to have any thing to do with them; and it is impossible to describe their state."*

The Peishwah, in spite of all his obligations to the Company's army, conducted himself with still greater remissness than the Nizam. "I certainly have a bad opinion of the Peishwah; he has no public feeling, and his private disposition is terrible. I have no positive proof that he has been treacherous, but I have a strong suspicion of it; and I know that since he signed the treaty of Bassein, he has done no one thing that has been desired, either with a view to forward his own interest, or the views of the alliance, or the common safety during the war."† To free his army from these difficulties, and to pay the Brinjarries, whom the love of gain alone retained, Wellesley levied a contribution upon Burhampoor, and sold the merchandise which he found at Assirghur. But the Governor-General did not approve of a proceeding which was contrary, as he said, to the customs of India; while the general-in-chief found his justification in this, that he had saved thereby the lives of his troops, and the honour and interests of British India. Meanwhile Scindia, despairing, after the severe check which he had sustained, of being able to renew hostilities with any chance of success, sent an agent on the 6th of November, to propose to the English a suspension of arms. Wellesley, for several reasons, accepted that proposal. In the first place, by forcing the enemy to evacuate their possessions in the Deccan, he had accomplished the objects which he had in view. In the next place, the English army was not in a con-

* Letter to Munro, 1st November, 1803.

† Letter to Major Shawe, 26th January, 1804.

dition to pursue the Mahratta cavalry, which still had it in its power to do a great deal of mischief, and, above all, to interrupt his operations in Berar. Finally, by granting a suspension of arms to Scindia, and still carrying on war against the Rajah, he would be able to break the alliance which existed between these two chiefs, and to divide their interests and their aims.

It was an able stroke of policy, which dislocated the confederation and prepared the way for a definite arrangement. "I know very well," says Wellesley, "that this cessation of arms is contrary to all rules, but, under existing circumstances, I believe the violation of these rules will be of more advantage to the public good than the observance of them." Lord Mornington having signified his approval, the conqueror of Assaye was charged to negotiate a treaty of peace, conforming himself all the while to the general views which had been communicated to him; yet it was difficult to establish a base for the arrangement, not only because of the bad faith and duplicity of Scindia, but on account of the various interests, almost all opposed one to the other, which were upon the cards.

The opinions which Wellesley expressed on this occasion are remarkable. He proposed, among other things, that the Nizam should be obliged to keep on foot a larger and better appointed army. "Without that," he says, "all things will appear to go on well at Hyderabad, and in the despatches of the resident to the Governor-General; but in point of fact there will be weakness and confusion everywhere, and in the end the government of the Nizam will fall to pieces." He argued strongly, at the same time, against disbanding Scindia's troops, as well as those of the other chiefs

whom the English might yet be required to overthrow. Such acts appeared to him impolitic and dangerous, inasmuch as the discharged soldiers would have no other resource than either to break up with arms in their hands into bodies of brigands, or else to swell the ranks of chiefs who might still be hostile to the British government. It was in this manner that the dissolution of the Nizam's army had augmented the power of the Rajah of Berar and of Scindia; just as, without doubt, the ruin of the military establishments of these latter would add to the resources of Holkar, now the only remaining formidable enemy to English supremacy. Wellesley thought besides that the contingents provided by the Company would be insufficient to maintain order over such a vast extent of country. "Their numbers," he says, "ought to be doubled or tripled, in order to repress the bandits who endanger the safety of the states."

After having pointed out this inconvenience, with many others, he suggested that the Company's allies should be obliged, by the treaty of peace, to maintain their own military power intact.* It was objected to this arrangement that it contradicted the principle upon which all treaties of alliance had heretofore been formed, which, by assigning to each chief, whether conquered or protected, an auxiliary force, kept him, so far as regarded the maintenance of order and his defence against foreign enemies, in a state of dependence upon the British government. Wellesley in vain demonstrated that the results of such a policy could not but be troublesome in the extreme; that it would entail immense expense, fill the subsidiary states with

* See letter to Major Shawe, 26th February, 1804.

bands of robbers, and disturb order and security, the primary sources of all wealth. No attention was paid to him, and the opposite system was persevered in, simply because it was believed to be favourable to the development of English power.

While these negotiations were going on, Scindia, in total disregard of the terms of the armistice, joined his troops to the main body of the army of the Rajah, with whom hostilities had not yet ceased. As the attitude assumed by these forces hindered Stevenson from commencing the siege of Gawilghur, Wellesley put himself in motion, with a view to co-operate in that enterprise. The junction of the two armies was happily effected, and the same day, perceiving that the enemy was disposed to hold his ground, Wellesley attacked them in front of the village of Argaum; though his own troops had marched since the morning twenty-six miles, under a burning sun, and night was fast approaching.

He had, at that time, under his orders fourteen battalions of infantry, with six regiments of cavalry, in all 14,000 men, exclusive of 4000 irregular horse. The enemy's force, commanded by Scindia in person, and by his brother, the Rajah of Berar, amounted to about 40,000. The infantry and guns of the Rajah were upon the left centre. The army of Scindia, consisting of a corps of heavy cavalry, held the right, and each wing was covered by a body of light cavalry. The line of battle extended in length about five miles; in rear were the village, with the large gardens and enclosures of Argaum, and in front stretched a plain which was crossed by a water-course. Wellesley attacked in two lines, advancing his right wing to double up the left of the enemy. His troops moved in the best possible order,

and appeared to suffer nothing from fatigue; but at the first discharge, three battalions of sepoys, who had behaved admirably at the battle of Assaye, were taken with a sudden panic and fled. Wellesley, by great good fortune, found himself close to these battalions, and was able to rally them and restore the order of the battle.

"If I had not been there," he says, "I am convinced that the day would have gone quite against us."

After a vain attempt on the part of Scindia's horse to pierce the left of the first line, composed of English infantry, the Mahratta army, thrown into disorder by the retreat of these squadrons, abandoned their position and left thirty-eight pieces of cannon, with all their stores, upon the field of battle. A clear moonlight enabled Wellesley's cavalry to pursue the enemy many miles, and to inflict upon them severe loss. The English made themselves masters of all the artillery, and of a number of elephants, camels, and baggage.

Wellesley had been upon horseback from six in the morning until midnight; if he could have fought the battle one hour earlier, the enemy's forces would have been completely destroyed. As it was, the victory of Argaum made a great impression throughout the country, and induced a portion of the Mahratta army to desert.

On the 31st, Wellesley put himself in march for Gawilghur. That celebrated place, belonging to the Rajah, occupied a strong position upon the crest of the high ground which interposes between the sources of the Poonah and those of the Taptie. Its chief defences lay in two forts; one to the south, which crowned a peaked rock (this was the interior fort), the other to

the north, barring the approach to the former, which constituted the exterior fort. Ramparts flanked with towers, and walls solidly built, surrounded the town, the entrance to which was by three gates opening upon narrow defiles, or by roads exposed to the fire of the garrison.

The enemy had a very high opinion of this place, and attached great importance to its possession. It was covered from the side of Ellichpoor by a group of precipitous mountains, and Stevenson's division experienced great difficulty in surmounting that obstacle. He found it necessary, indeed, to drag his heavy guns and waggons by strength of hand over thirty miles, and along roads which the troops were obliged to make for themselves. Having completed this operation he was able to begin the siege. The batteries opened fire on the night of the 12th of December, and four days afterwards the exterior walls near the southern gate presented a breach sufficiently large to justify an assault. Accordingly, on the 17th, one detachment was directed against that gate, while another made a false attack on the north-west gate. As soon as the garrison saw the ascent of the breach crowded with English bayonets, they sought safety in flight, and directed their course towards the north-west gate, where they found themselves again in presence of the enemy, who cut them to pieces. This success insured to the English the possession of the exterior fort; it remained to capture that on the south, which seemed as if it would offer a more determined resistance. After having vainly endeavoured to force the gate of that fort, a portion of the wall was discovered which would admit of escalade. Captain Campbell threw himself

upon it with a company of light infantry; he gained the top of the wall, and succeeded in opening the gate for one of his detachments. The English immediately penetrated into the work, and put the whole of the garrison to the sword.

This siege, which cost the English not more than 126 men, was very fatal to the enemy. The governor, the principal officers, and the greater number of the defenders, perished. There were found in the place fifty-two guns, 2000 English muskets, and 150 wall-pieces, carrying balls of from half-a-pound to a pound weight. Though Wellesley's division co-operated in bringing about this result, the chief credit is certainly due to Stevenson's troops, who gave the assault, and bore the brunt of the battle. Always just, invariably well-disposed towards his subordinates, Wellesley took pleasure in stating that fact in an order of the day which he addressed to the army. He expressed, at the same time, his extreme gratification that his efforts to put a stop to the habits of plunder which prevailed in India had begun to be crowned with success; for, within an hour after the assault, his army quitted Gawilghur in as good order as if it had merely marched through.

While the siege was in progress, negotiations went on rapidly. The Rajah of Berar concluded with Wellesley a treaty of alliance, bearing date the 7th of December; and Scindia, denuded of troops, money, and allies, ratified a similar engagement on the 30th of the same month. By virtue of these treaties, the Mahratta princes undertook to cede to the Company a territory of 4200 square miles in extent, which yielded a revenue of three millions sterling, and comprehended Delhi,

Agra, Gwalior, Gohud, Baroach, Ahmednugger, and other important places. They engaged also not to take into their service any European except with the permission of the Company. The Governor-General showed himself well pleased with this result, which indeed surpassed his expectations. "Your treaty with the Rajah of Berar," he writes on the 9th January, 1804, to his brother, "is wise, honourable, and glorious. I am extremely proud of it, and am convinced that it will form a brilliant era in the history of this country, and a noble termination to your military career." In his letter of the 11th of February, he expresses the same satisfaction respecting the treaty with Scindia, which he calls a glorious and brilliant conclusion to the war.

Though Wellesley was directed in these negotiations by the general views of his brother, it is certain that he exhibited in the management of details talent of the highest order. It is certain, indeed, that the Company would not have obtained conditions so advantageous, had not the negotiator won the confidence of the Mahratta chiefs by his frankness and loyalty; virtues rare in India, but of which the conqueror of the Mahrattas was possessed in no common degree. If he did not scruple, under certain circumstances, to resort to intrigue, that he might baffle the duplicity and bad faith of the native princes,—and if, at the beginning of the war, he had proposed to work upon the venality of the Mahrattas, with a view to obtain information of what was passing in the councils of the Peishwah, still he never permitted himself to be untrue to his promises, or to violate any of his engagements. And this integrity was the more remarkable in India, as Clive,

Hastings, and other celebrated persons, had not scrupled, under certain circumstances, to commit themselves, and even to boast of acts which were flagrantly disloyal. Success had indeed justified these acts in the eyes of most men, but Wellesley could not satisfy himself with any justification of the sort. His great merit is, that he succeeded in all that he undertook, without its being possible for any one to lay to his charge that he was perjured, deceitful, or cruel. We must be permitted to make a special record of this fact at a time when a general, belonging to the most civilised nation in the world, incurred no censure for having smoked to death, in their caves, women, children, and defenceless old men of the tribe against which he was carrying on war.

CHAP. IV.

WELLESLEY PURSUES AND PUTS TO THE ROUT A PARTY OF BRIGANDS ASSEMBLED ON THE FRONTIER OF THE DECCAN. — HE ORGANISES THE MILITARY RESOURCES OF THE PEISHWAH. — RECOMMENDS THAT HOLKAR BE CRUSHED. — ASKS LEAVE TO DEPART FOR EUROPE. — ARRIVES AT CALCUTTA. — IS OBLIGED TO UNDERTAKE AGAIN THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS OF THE DECCAN. — RESIGNS HIS POWERS, AND EMBARKS IN MARCH, 1805. — MARKS OF RESPECT AND SYMPATHY WHICH ARE SHOWN TO HIM BY THE INHABITANTS OF THE COUNTRY. — IS CREATED A KNIGHT OF THE BATH. — IS CONGRATULATED BY THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT. — THE VARIOUS SERVICES RENDERED BY WELLESLEY TO BRITISH INDIA. — HIS IDEAS OF THE FUTURE OF INDIA, AND OF ITS GOVERNMENT. — THE REFORMS INTRODUCED BY HIM INTO THE ORGANISATION OF ITS TROOPS, AND IN THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF ADMINISTRATION. — HIS INFLUENCE OVER THE NATIVES. — HIS JUSTICE, LOYALTY, MERCY, AND DISINTERESTEDNESS. — PARALLEL BETWEEN WELLESLEY AND LORD CLIVE.

Towards the end of January, 1804, Wellesley put himself in march, to surprise and cut in pieces a body of brigands, which had assembled on the frontier of the Deccan. These adventurers, whose strength consisted chiefly in horsemen, had beaten one of the Nizam's detachments, and were making preparations for fresh enterprises. Though suffering at the time from a disease very common in India, Wellesley performed his marches with extraordinary rapidity. "The fatigue of that expedition," says Vieusseux, "was such, that the Duke, many years afterwards, spoke of it as the most harassing service in which he had ever been en-

gaged." His troops, in order to overtake the brigands, covered sixty miles in thirty hours; yet they scarcely arrived in view when the brigands, warned no doubt by a deserter from the English army, broke up their camp with the greatest precipitation. Nevertheless he succeeded in overtaking them, in putting them to the rout, and in making himself master of their cannon, their *matériel*, and the greater part of their baggage. After this exploit, Wellesley, to whom the management of the political and military affairs of the Deccan and of the Mahratta states had been committed, returned to Poonah, that he might organise the auxiliary forces of the Peishwah. His correspondence shows that this duty drew upon him the extreme dislike of that prince, who manifested towards him the most unaccountable jealousy.

From Poonah Wellesley repaired to Seringapatam. He wrote from thence, a short time afterwards, to General Lake, to ask whether that officer would have any objection to his returning to Europe for the establishment of his health, which had begun to give way under fatigue and the trying climate of India. On the 12th of May Lake replied to him thus:—"I beg to assure you, that however great may be my reluctance to lose your services, your assistance, and your advice, in carrying on the operations in which we are still engaged, I shall not be so selfish as to refuse the leave for which you apply."

A short time afterwards, having obtained the permission of the Governor-General, Wellesley resigned the political and military powers which he exercised in the Deccan, and returned to Calcutta, where he arrived in the beginning of August. While waiting in that city the order to embark, he occupied himself upon a mul-

titude of questions relative to the government and pacification of the newly acquired states; but in the month of November, the condition of political affairs obliged Lord Mornington to re-establish his brother for a brief space in the command of the Deccan. Wellesley returned in consequence to Seringapatam, where no great while elapsed ere fever again attacked him; a circumstance which, added to the satisfactory condition of the country, decided him upon making a new application for leave to quit India. The Governor-General offered no opposition, and General Wellesley took, in February, 1805, his final leave of the inhabitants and garrison of Seringapatam.

It is, however, necessary to observe, that the failure of his health was not the sole reason which induced the conqueror of the Mahrattas to return to England. At the time when he first applied for leave in June, 1804, British India was at peace with all the warlike princes round. Holkar alone excepted; and Holkar's army, greatly reduced by desertion and suffering, appeared incapable of holding its ground for any length of time against the force under Lake. Neither glory nor advancement was therefore any longer to be looked for in that part of the world. In Europe, on the contrary, a large field of activity presented itself to the young general, and he himself declares that he was not vain enough to believe that his military services in India could be put in the balance against similar services in any other part of the world. "I believe," he says, "that I have served in this country as long a time as any man ought to do who is able to serve elsewhere, and who has the chance of being employed in Europe in such a manner as shall give him the opportunity of bringing himself forward."

General Wellesley was, besides, much annoyed at the moment, by disputes brought on by the native princes in regard to the treaties which he had concluded. "All," he says, "were delighted for the moment with peace; but the demon of ambition appeared meanwhile to have taken hold of them, and each struggles, by false interpretations, to gain what he can. The whole affair has vexed me exceedingly." To these powerful reasons there was added an unexpressed dissatisfaction with the somewhat ungenerous conduct of the English Government and the Court of Directors towards himself. For two years he had commanded a division, or rather a *corps d'armée*, with which he had fought several battles, and gained two important victories. Now not only did they withhold from him the rank of general of division, to which he had established so good a right, but they had failed to confirm the appointment to the staff at Fort St. George, which had been conferred on him by General Stuart. "I was justified," he says, "in expecting this nomination, and in the meanwhile, but for the sad death of General Fraser, the arrival of General Smith would have made me a supernumerary."

With respect to the Court of Directors, he complained that he had been treated by it with very little justice, although he could refer to the fact, without example, that he had been employed under all the governments in India, and been put in communication with all the political residents, and with very many of the civil authorities, without leaving the slightest trace, either in their official registers or in their private correspondence, that they had disapproved of any of his actions, or brought a single complaint against him. "I have served the Company in important situations for many years, and

have never received any thing but injury from the Court of Directors, although I am a singular instance of an officer who has served under all the governments, and in communication with all the political residents, and many civil authorities; and there is not an instance on record, or in any private correspondence, of disapprobation of any one of my acts, or a single complaint, or even a symptom of ill-temper, from any one of the political or civil authorities in communication with whom I have acted."*

Since Robert Clive, no English general had done so much for the glory and prosperity of India. Besides having been victorious on every occasion, he was able to congratulate himself that, through the force of his talent and the accuracy of his foresight, he had never lost in all his campaigns a single convoy, or the smallest portion of the Company's property. Notwithstanding all this, the desire to return to Europe did not overmaster, in Wellesley, his great anxiety for the public good. He abstained from asking leave to depart till there remained nothing more of importance to be done. In many of his letters indeed he expresses his willingness to remain ("if it be even for some years more"), provided his presence could be of the smallest use to the country. It was thus that he acted in conformity with a rule which he had laid down some months previously, when he refused to one of his friends (Major Graham) leave to quit Madras upon family affairs. He had written on that occasion, "A man in office, to whom important public interests have been confided, ought to put all private considerations out of mind—his own as well as

* Letter to Major Shawe, 4th January, 1805.

those of others."* With the same patriotism, he considered himself bound, before embarking for England, to communicate to the principal officers with whom he had been connected, his ideas upon the future of British India—upon the best means of rendering it prosperous, of maintaining peace, or, in case of need, of continuing the war. To Colonel Murray, who had been detached to Guzzerat, he wrote, "that in order to obtain the support of the Mahrattas, it would be necessary to treat them with the greatest kindness and benevolence, without forgetting, however, that they were a people destitute of truth, and always prone to treachery."

To Lieut.-Colonel Wallace, the successor of Stevenson in the command of the auxiliary troops of the Nizam, he gave excellent advice in regard to the manner in which political affairs ought to be conducted. To the same officer, to Colonel Murray, and to General Lake, he explained the system of operations which offered the best prospect of reducing the natives, and especially Holkar, now the only Mahratta prince who was in a state of open hostility towards the English. "Have always at hand," he said to them, "provisions enough to render you independent of your magazines, at all events during the time necessary for an expedition. If the enemy approach with cannon and infantry, place your baggage in some fortified village, or else throw up small redoubts, in a convenient situation, to cover it; leave a guard with the baggage, and then throw yourselves resolutely upon his battalions while on the march; if you beat these, the cavalry will run away. There is no position

2nd March, 1804.

in which you could defend your camp against an artillery so formidable as that of the Mahrattas. If you have cavalry, harass the enemy's troops as often as possible: above all, do not allow yourselves to be attacked by them in your camp. Never think of forcing their position, for they always select one which is strong and almost inaccessible; but whenever you find them on the move, place your baggage in safety, and sally out of your camp. You will encounter them in the state of disorder which is usual upon the march, and they will not find time to form, for they are but half-disciplined troops; in any case you will have the advantage of attacking them upon ground which they have not chosen, and with all the advantages of which you are acquainted; a part only of their forces will be engaged, and you cannot fail to obtain an easy victory." These recommendations exhibit a sound judgment, matured by experience, and a singularly observant mind.

It was for want of comprehending the tactics of the natives, and the best means of dealing with them, that a detachment of Lake's army, under the orders of Colonel Monson was, in 1804, completely destroyed by Holkar's troops. This detachment, about 12,000 strong, could not muster at the close of the day more than one tenth of its effective strength; a disaster unparalleled, which might have brought about a fresh insurrection among the Mahrattas, and counteracted the effect of the previous victories. A few words will explain how the affair came about.

Holkar, who hated Scindia, had remained neutral during the war which the English carried on against that prince and the Rajah of Berar; but after the successive defeats of his rival's troops, he had collected

about 100,000 men, almost all mounted, with a view to undertake a sort of guerilla warfare. General Lake had advanced against that multitude, and easily put it to flight. Meanwhile one of his subordinates, Colonel Monson, who had been left alone at Malwah, at a distance of 200 miles from the army, had been attacked by the brigands and compelled to retreat; his little army, consisting of 4000 regular troops, 3000 irregular cavalry, and fifteen guns, had been joined at Rampoor by two battalions and 3000 irregular horse. Holkar followed him with 20,000 cavalry, as many infantry, and 160 pieces of cannon; and he knew so well how to profit by the ground, and by the inexperience of Colonel Monson, that this latter entered Agra, with only 1000 soldiers, footsore or sick, and destitute of artillery, of baggage, and of stores. Fatigue and desertion had done him more damage than battles. That painful retreat, which he accomplished in July and August of 1804, might have led to the most serious consequences, on account of the moral effect which was produced by it throughout India. Already Holkar had laid siege to Delhi, when Lake, resuming the offensive, compelled him, about the middle of October, to withdraw from it. On the 13th of the following month, General Fraser defeated, in the neighbourhood of Deeg, twenty-four battalions of the enemy, supported by a strong cavalry, and 160 guns. Three days afterwards, Lake, in person, encountered at Furakabad, Holkar's army, about 20,000 or 30,000 strong, and put it to the rout without himself sustaining any serious loss. Such of the enemy's troops as succeeded in rallying, threw themselves into Deeg; the place was immediately besieged, and on the 23rd of December the garrison surrendered at discre-

tion. Abandoning to the conqueror his artillery and magazines, which were considerable, Holkar escaped with 4000 horsemen into the state of Bhurtpore, the Rajah of which gave him a friendly reception. Desirous of obtaining satisfaction for that act of hostility, General Lake proceeded to lay siege to the Rajah's capital. Unfortunately the siege operations did not meet with the success which they deserved; insomuch that, after many assaults, in which the valour of the English troops shone with great brilliancy, the besieger was obliged to abandon his enterprise, and to conclude a treaty on the 2nd of May, 1805, in accordance with which the Rajah sent orders that Holkar should quit Bhurtpore.

The Mahratta chief did not permit himself to be overwhelmed by this new stroke of fortune. Followed by no more than 3000 or 4000 men, he went in search of Scindia, who received him well, in spite of the treaty of peace concluded with England. The troops of that faithless ally, combined with those of Holkar, made, a short time afterwards, an inroad into the Company's territory; but, being encountered about sixty miles from Bhurtpore by General Lake, they sustained a complete overthrow. It was the last episode in the Mahratta war, and the last success obtained under the administration of the Earl of Mornington.

That illustrious statesman had found himself, for some time back, at variance with the Court of Directors, and with a party in the English nation, who attributed to his unmeasured ambition the continuance of the war, and the financial embarrassments of which they complained. Wearied with this opposition, he had, in the month of December, 1803, applied for permission to

return to England; but the events which followed obliged him to defer his departure up to the commencement of 1805.

His successor, Lord Cornwallis, arrived at Calcutta on the 30th of July; but, worn out by age and hard work, that noble veteran died two months afterwards. Till a new Governor-General could be appointed, Sir George Barlow assumed the reins of government. A statesman of moderate capacity, and full of crotchets, he maintained, contrary to the advice of General Lake, the peaceful policy which Cornwallis had been instructed to establish, and was happy, in consequence, when Scindia expressed himself willing to enter into a new arrangement, to send him a negotiator instead of an army. The victor of Laswarrie, trained in the great school of Wellesley, had been anxious, on the contrary, to punish that chief for having supported Holkar, and had caused the English resident to be withdrawn; but his remonstrances were disregarded, and the too feeble governor signed, on the 23rd of November, 1805, a treaty which it was very certain that Scindia would not observe. Holkar, who himself had said, "All my estates are upon my horse's saddle," was the object of similar mismanagement, and, on the 24th of December, concluded a treaty equally disadvantageous, which put an end to the war. Meanwhile Lord Mornington returned to England, dissatisfied with the Court of Directors, but delighted with the King, who had created him Marquis of Wellesley, and satisfied, besides, that he would be sufficiently recompensed for the calumnies of the press by the glory and imperishable advantages which he had secured to his country.

General Wellesley did not interfere directly in the war

with Holkar, but his correspondence proves, that he directed it by his counsels from the beginning to the end. We refer particularly to his letter of the 17th of March, 1804, to General Stuart, and to that of the 27th of May, to General Lake, in both of which the designs of the Mahratta chief, and the means best adapted to destroy his influence, are pointed out with great precision. That of the 18th of March, to the Governor-General, contains the project of a plan of campaign, in case of a rupture with Holkar, an event which, at the date in question, was by no means certain. The Governor, referring to that letter, writes to his brother on the 16th of April: "I have instructed General Lake to commence operations against Holkar as soon as the weather will permit; and I have authorised you to co-operate with him. I approve entirely of the disposition of the troops under your command, as well as of the plan of military operations which you have suggested in the event of a war with Djeswunt Rao Holkar."

To understand exactly the part which Wellesley played in this war, and the influence which he exercised throughout India, it is necessary to read again his memorandum of the 5th of November, 1804, as well as that of the 3rd of November, in the same year, in which he developes his ideas to General Lake concerning the mode of employing and subsisting his troops. This latter memorandum seems to have been called for by Lord Mornington, who received at that period, frequent complaints of the sufferings of the troops employed against Holkar.

At the moment of embarking for England, Arthur Wellesley pressed for the last time upon the authorities,

the wisdom of compelling the allies to maintain troops for the security and well-being of the settlement. When we reflect upon the instability of the governments, and the progressive decadence of the natives of India in the course of a single age, we may well ask, whether Wellesley had not good reason to complain of the line of action pursued by the statesmen of England, and whether the triumph of order and civilisation was not more likely to produce advantageous results, than conquest based upon the antagonism of races, on the ignorance of the people, and the weakness of the native sovereigns. This is, indeed, a delicate matter to handle, inasmuch as it touches the very root of the English power, as well as the reputation of the statesmen who brought about the success of the existing system. Nevertheless, in a work consecrated to the biography of Wellington, it is necessary to consider well whether that illustrious man was capable, upon a question of such importance, of putting forth ideas which were neither just nor practicable.

In reading the works of Sinclair, Malcolm, Heber, Alison, Porter, and other English writers, one is tempted to believe that the peninsula of the Ganges has been making, for some years back, remarkable progress. But these writers, if they are impartial, have probably judged of the condition of the country from certain isolated facts, or from the condition, altogether exceptional, of certain maritime towns, such as Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. They who have travelled throughout the length and breadth of India, and compared in a spirit of equity the actual condition of the people with that which preceded it, arrive at a very different conclusion. "So far as their material com-

forts are concerned," says Count de Warren, "the condition of the natives has degenerated from year to year; and, as to their moral state, it has made no progress since the days of Alexander." Such is also the opinion of Metcalfe, of Henry Russell, Macaulay, Mill, Montgomery Martin, and the celebrated Burke. This latter did not hesitate to say openly in the House of Commons, "If the English were driven from India, they would leave no better traces of their supremacy than the hyæna and the tiger." There is, doubtless, exaggeration of language in this, yet it cannot be denied that the misery of the Hindoos is extreme, and that it increases from day to day.

Manufactures in former days gave occupation to multitudes of hands, and the natives had acquired an undoubted superiority in that respect, particularly in the texture of their stuffs. It is now replaced by agriculture, on which fall heavy imposts, always rigorously exacted. An enormous land-tax has the effect of paralysing the industry of the country. In many places the fishermen, unable to salt their fish, sell them at a price which is not remunerative. The cultivation of opium and the monopoly in salt have wrought the greatest mischief to the rural population. Commerce upon a great scale, trade and manufactures, are in the hands of British subjects, who alone profit by that state of things. The vast public works constructed by native princes are falling, through neglect, into decay, and the Company has erected none of its own except those required for military purposes. "Thus Great Britain has contrived to expend all the treasures of that fair land, without employing the smallest portion of it to promote the material prosperity of the conquered

people."* Montgomery Martin has demonstrated, that the capital withdrawn from circulation within fifty years amounts to two milliards and a half, and that the quantity of precious metal exported to England on account of the Company's government, between 1811 and 1834, reached the enormous sum of two hundred millions. It is this which makes him say, "The situation of India may be compared to that of an individual deprived of food, from whom, nevertheless, there is daily taken away a portion of his blood. The results are atrophy, convulsions, death." One member of the English parliament, Mr. Mills, characterises with not less severity the political system which prevails in India. "That system," he says, "consists in the removal by the Company from subsidised princes of all responsibility in what concerns the maintenance of order and external defence. The people of the subsidised states know very well that the English power is too formidable to permit the slightest hope of success to an isolated movement in any one part of India. They know, also, that the peninsula is too much portioned out, and too much divided, ever to make a common effort. And this it is which makes them resign themselves to so terrible a yoke. The same conviction encourages the Hindoo or Mussulman princes to abuse the small remnant of power which has been left to them. All accordingly give themselves up to violent exactions, and take no account either of the ruin or well-being of those whom they govern. We can perfectly understand how the administration of justice must be deplorable in states where the prince has nothing to expect from the love of his

* De Warren.

people on account of the good measures which he may originate, nor anything to dread from their opposites."*

The Swedish general, Count Biornstierna, who was for ten years minister in London, confirms these statements in a remarkable work upon British India, which he has published. "Such," says he, "is the condition of affairs in these subsidised states, that the people desire nothing more eagerly than to pass under the direct government of the Company, which, according to all accounts, is much milder and more just than that of their own princes."

Biornstierna has been reproached with being too favourable to the English system. Yet, after having proved by figures that the Hindoos exported to Europe, in 1814, about fifty millions of manufactured goods, while, at the same time, they were tributaries to Great Britain to a like amount, he pronounces that, thanks to the triumph of European industry, there are now millions of workmen destitute of bread, and reduced to a state of mendicancy. "Year by year the exports diminish and the imports increase; from which necessarily results," says the same writer, "a steady decrease of the riches of the country. The sole productions acceptable to the metropolis are silk and indigo, of which the latter profit only the English themselves, who own almost all the plantations. In a word, the principal commerce of India depends at this day upon an enormous crime,—that is to say, upon the exportation of 20,000 cases of opium, valued at 75 millions of francs, with which they poison the Chinese. Behold the state to which that country is reduced which was considered in

* Report to the House of Commons, 1832.

former times the richest in the universe, and upon which Nature seems to have exhausted all her favours!"

Sir Henry Russell, who, from 1811 to 1820, held office as resident at Hyderabad, wrote on the 21st of September, 1824, a remarkable letter to the Court of Directors, in which he expresses the same opinions respecting the subsidiary system. "From the moment we establish a subsidiary government, we find ourselves upon a fatal declivity, from which there is no retreating. The first step leads on to a second, and we are conducted invariably to the same issue,—the ruin and destruction of the protected state. As yet we have nothing to fear; it is in each accession to our territory that we find and create for ourselves dangers. From the moment a state passes under our direct authority, our European functionaries monopolise all the offices; the higher and middle classes find no place left for them to fill, and very soon perish of want. Hence the amount of national hatred goes on increasing. Our empire cannot remain stationary, and the day on which we cease to advance we shall fall back."

In 1824, Lord Metcalfe, formerly Governor-General of India, said, in reference to the stability of the Indian government, "We are sitting upon a barrel of gunpowder." "Our supremacy in India," he writes, "is so precarious, that a few trifling errors of administration will be sufficient to secure our expulsion; indeed, the course of events will probably bring this about." Again, "To all appearance we are more powerful now in India than we ever were before, nevertheless our overthrow may take place at any moment. When once it begins it will probably be rapid, and the world will be as much surprised by the sudden disappearance of our empire,

as it was astonished by our marvellous conquests. . . . . We have passed the period of vigour and of glory, perhaps we have already arrived at that of premature old age. We have ceased to excite the astonishment of the natives. The prestige which used to encircle us has vanished; our subjects have had time to inquire into the causes which brought about their subjection; we shall see by and by the consequences of this inquiry."

With respect to the vices of the interior administration, these have been pointed out by men the best qualified to judge, and the most deserving of credit. General Sir Charles Napier wrote on the 31st of May, 1850, to one of his friends, "The atrocities committed here are indescribable. You will not be able to discover traces of this in your Calcutta library; but I, who have traversed every district of the country, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, have been witness for years back to the most disgraceful proceedings." The same year he writes to the Duke of Wellington: "The system pursued here is to oppress the plebeian and to protect the aristocrat, who is our mortal enemy. He cannot avoid being our enemy, because we take his place. He goes down the social ladder, and we plant our feet upon his head. A man of the people will serve us, and at the same time be our friend. It is upon him that we must mainly count for the preservation of India. . . . . No one can foretell the final issue of our conquest, but if we hold out the hand to the people, we may keep India for ages. Justice, vigorous and severe, will work miracles. It is based upon the natural desire of man to be protected against cruelty, and has a foundation which cannot be undermined. India will be safe when it is so governed; but from the manner in which people

conduct themselves, I am satisfied that we shall find some difficulty in defending it for a single year." Colonel Powlett Cameron is equally explicit. "I have witnessed within the last two years, under British rule, acts of individual oppression and injustice which could not have been surpassed by any Russian authority throughout the whole of the Muscovite empire, originating too in the most illiberal and unworthy motives." Only the other day an ex-judge of Surat, Mr. David Luard, confirmed this opinion by quoting a large number of facts which leave no room for doubt as to the faults of administration and the corruption of the magistracy of British India. Finally, our readers may recollect that a few years ago, a solemn inquiry, instituted by the House of Commons, proved in the clearest manner that in more than one province torture was employed as a legitimate means to enforce the payment of the taxes.

We are forced to conclude from these testimonies, and from facts which cannot be gainsaid, that so far as regards material comforts, the English administration has been mischievous to the natives of India. That administration has not, in the region of morals, been much more fortunate; at the same time it has made some advances of which it would be unjust not to take account. For example, it has established, in the conquered or protected states, a strong police, which has rapidly diminished the amount of crime. It has restrained numberless acts of oppression on the part of native governments. It has put a stop to internal revolts, provoked in certain states by the turbulence of their chiefs. It has conceded to the natives of India the liberty of the press, education, and the sacred right of being judged by their peers. It has suppressed many

barbarous customs; fewer however than we had a right to expect from so enlightened a nation. Its missionaries have in several provinces spread with success the light of the Gospel through the land. And lastly, it has opened good schools in all the chief centres of population. Nevertheless this latter benefit can produce no important results, so long as the institution of caste is permitted to exist; so long as the government contributes in no degree to the material welfare of the people, and systematically excludes the natives from offices of importance in the army, in civil administration, and in finance.

It would appear, from all that we have said, that England has been more desirous of exhausting India than of civilising it; of rendering its population incapable of governing themselves than of communicating to them that knowledge of the arts which usually inspires those who possess it with a desire to render themselves free. This policy, as little Christian as it is liberal, has been recognised up to very recent times. When called before the Committee on Indian Affairs, Lord Ellenborough said, in 1852, "How can we remain masters of the people if we instruct the people? If we civilise them we shall not retain our hold upon them three months. An enlightened people will never submit to our government." The honest conscience of Arthur Wellesley would not permit him to give his sanction to such a system of government. Perhaps, too, his sense of right had taught the victor of Assaye to comprehend this great moral maxim, "That a policy which is unjust cannot be wise; and that the well understood interest of the people and of individuals is always in accord with justice." However this may be, we may

gather from the Wellington correspondence, that the happiness of the natives of India occupied a larger share of General Wellesley's thoughts than the immediate advancement of the mercantile interests of England. He believed that the best way of securing the fidelity of the natives was to attach them by acts of kindness to their rulers, and that more was to be gained in the end by developing the resources of the country, than by drying up the springs of its wealth in the attempt to obtain immediate advantages from them. It was the future to which he looked, and not the present. Now the future, according to Wellesley's system, was prosperity resulting from civilisation; the future, according to the actual system, is misery brought on by oppression.

But in giving to the native princes a national army, in augmenting their importance and diminishing that of the Company, there might be some risk of preparing the way for the enfranchisement of the English possessions; and it is that which the statesmen of Great Britain desired, and still desire, at every cost to avoid. Can they succeed? Will they be able, for any length of time, still to exhaust India as they have hitherto done? Experience alone can decide the question. Meanwhile, till it shall have pronounced either for the Company's system or for that of which Wellesley desired to lay the first foundations, it may be well to remember that all the probabilities are in favour of the latter.

We have dwelt upon the more prominent of the circumstances which characterise the departure of Wellesley, because they clearly indicate the importance of the part which his talents and services had enabled him display. There can be no doubt that he was the true

military chief of British India. The tokens of esteem and respect which he received at the close of the Mahratta war, and at the moment of his departure from India, sufficiently prove this. The English settlers in Calcutta presented him with a valuable sword, and not content with that mark of regard, they voted the construction of a monument, to perpetuate the memory of his services at the battle of Assaye. Nor were the inhabitants of Bombay behind those of Calcutta; they invited the conqueror of Scindia to sumptuous feasts, and presented to him an address of congratulation, in which they declared him to be as great in the cabinet as in the field. Finally, the officers of the army of the Deccan presented him with a table service in gold, of the value of 2000*l.*, bearing this inscription: "*Battle of Assaye, 23rd September*, 1805."

When Wellesley was on the point of embarking, other manifestations were called forth. The officers of the division which he had last commanded, those of the garrison of Seringapatam, and of his old regiment, the 33rd, expressed their regret at his departure in addresses full of the warmest and most generous sentiments. But however agreeable to him might appear this spontaneous expression of the esteem and regard of his brave companions in arms, it was doubtless even less touching than the sentiments, frank and truthful, which the native inhabitants of Seringapatam expressed towards him. "You have a right to our gratitude," say they, "for the tranquillity, security, and prosperity, which we have enjoyed under your beneficent administration. We address our prayers to the God of all castes and of all nations, that he will grant you health, glory, and good fortune."

Some time before his departure from Madras, the officers, civil and military, of that presidency, got up a grand fête, in his honour, at the Pantheon. They caused his portrait to be painted, and placed it amongst those of the men who had done honour to the city. About the same time Lord Mornington received from Lord Castlereagh a letter, containing congratulations, both to himself and to the generals who had carried his plans into execution, and in which it was announced to him that parliament had voted its thanks to the Governor-General of India, and to the victors of Assaye and Laswarrie. Meanwhile, Lord Camden, in a very flattering letter, informed Lord Mornington, on the part of the King, that His Majesty had raised General Lake to the peerage, and nominated Wellesley an extra knight of the Order of the Bath. That order comprehended at the time twenty-four knights only, and since it was impossible to add one to the number, His Majesty, by special favour, decided that Sir Arthur's creation and investiture should not wait for succession to a regular vacancy.

The future hero of the Peninsula embarked on the 10th of March, on board the "Trident." The evening before his departure he had taken leave of the troops of his division, in an order of the day as simple as it was modest. We find in it the following paragraph:—"The major-general earnestly recommends to the officers never to lose sight of the great principles of military service, viz.— to maintain discipline among the troops, and to encourage in their own body the spirit and opinions which are becoming in gentlemen. This is the only way to accomplish all that is noble and great in their profession."

The career of the two Wellesleys in India was marked by an amount of success which might well nigh be attributed to the interposition of Heaven. Thanks to the happy combination between them of political ability and enterprising generalship, French influence at the court of the Nizam was destroyed, and the empire of Tippoo Saib overthrown. The Peishwah, re-established as the head of the Mahratta confederation, had become the chosen ally of the Company — the Franco-Indian troops whom General Perron had assembled on the banks of the Jumna were dispersed — the great Mogul had become a mere pensioner on the bounty of England — the thrones of Scindia, of Holkar, and of the Rajah of Berar had been upheld on terms advantageous to the Company, and the immense territories appertaining to the British Empire were tripled in extent, in wealth, and in power. In a word, the work of Clive, of Warren Hastings, and of Cornwallis, had received its final completion. India belonged no more to the Mogul or to the Mahrattas, it was become definitively English.

There is nothing to be compared with these marvellous results, except perhaps the successes obtained in the middle of the eighteenth century by Robert Clive, Lord of Plassey, at a moment when the British power seemed to have fallen beyond the chance of recovery. They equally contributed to assure to Great Britain the irresistible ascendency which she has preserved up to the present date in the countries of Asia.

When Sir Arthur Wellesley quitted the theatre of his first exploits, the English Government had become master of a large portion of the peninsula. It was protector also of the chief native powers, and mediator, by treaty, in all the disputes which might arise among them.

There remained for it nothing more than to subdue certain Mahratta chiefs in the north, and then to extend its conquests, with a progress more or less gradual, to the further side of the Indus, over the Burmese, the Sikhs, and the Affghans. The war with the two former powers has been fought out, that with the Affghans is suspended. Good success has doubtless attended the threefold strife. But not one of them has so largely contributed to the importance of the Anglo-Indian empire as the wars of Clive and of Wellesley. The influence of these great men — these real founders of English power in the East — corresponded with the nature of the position which they severally occupied in the country. Robert Clive, originally a mere official, or writer, in one of the Company's factories, became a lieutenant. He was scarcely nominated to this rank ere he conceived a plan, which in good time he carried into execution, of driving the French — then all powerful — from the countries of the East. With a handful of brave men he made himself master of Arcot. He then assumed the offensive, expelled the enemy from the whole of the Carnatic, and raised the settlement to greatness when it was on the point of being destroyed. Wellesley, less daring, but not less able, was, though holding no higher rank than that of colonel, the soul and real chief of the army which invaded Mysore. His services raised him to the government of that important country, and not long afterwards he directed, as Major-General, the principal operations in the war with the Mahrattas. Like Robert Clive, he had the keen *coup d'œil* and the strength of determination which characterise great commanders. Both knew how to gain the confidence of their soldiers, to

inspire the native powers with respect or fear, and to take their own course whenever circumstances required. Both, likewise, added to these striking military talents a remarkable aptitude for civil administration, and the management of political affairs. But Wellesley surpassed Clive in a depth of probity and honour which hindered him on every occasion from employing means which were not in strict accordance with justice and good faith. The conduct of the victor of Plassey, often barbarous, and almost always Machiavellian, raised against him many enemies. The justice and good faith of Wellesley, on the other hand, are cited by the natives of India themselves, as giving him a special claim upon their admiration. Under all circumstances he showed himself true to his engagements; as jealous of the reputation of England as he was bent upon advancing her political interests and material prosperity. We could quote twenty letters, in which he urges both those who acted under him and his superiors, to make reparation for outrages committed, or to censure acts calculated to shake the high opinion which it was desirable that the natives should entertain of the justice and greatness of the English people.

"I am certain," he writes to the Governor of Bombay, "that you will not succeed in any negotiation unless it be based upon respect for our government, and in which you do not employ language which is open and candid." It was the same conviction which made him say, in reference to the negotiations with the Mahrattas, "I would willingly give Gwalior, ten times over, or all the other fortresses in India, rather than risk the loss of our reputation for scrupulous good faith, and the honourable advantages which we acquired

in the last war, and in the peace with which it was concluded. We ought not to sacrifice these advantages to arguments founded on the principles of the law of nations, which the people of this country will very little understand. What was it that kept me right amidst the embarrassments of the war, and of the negotiations which followed it? British good faith, and nothing else." We look in vain for this integrity and uprightness in the acts or the correspondence of Clive and of Warren Hastings; both of whom, unfortunately, did much to justify the reproach which Europe has so often cast upon English policy in India,—that it is totally wanting in candour and good faith.

Besides all this, Wellesley is distinguished above the majority of statesmen who have played a part in Indian affairs by his delicacy and extreme disinterestedness. "For a long time back," says Cantu, "a discreditable corruption everywhere prevailed. Men mixed in politics in order to profit by gifts, which have entered largely at all times into eastern negotiations, and which the law might restrain, but could not prohibit."* Hastings was convicted of having profited by the system, and it was publicly admitted that Lord Clive had received, on a single occasion, 6,000,000 of francs from Meer Jaffeer, for having placed him on the throne of Bengal. At his return to England, his personal fortune amounted to two millions of money. No act of the kind could be imputed to Wellesley. When the Rajah of Kittoor offered him 10,000 pagodas as the price of obtaining for him the protection of the English government, Sir Arthur replied to the officer who conveyed to him the message, "I am surprised that one invested with the character of an English officer should not

* Histoire Universelle.

have made the rajah understand that such a proposal would be considered as an insult ; and that he did not hinder the rajah from making it instead of encouraging him to do so, and himself immediately afterwards accepting a fourth part of the sum." Colonel Gurwood states, that an offer of the same sort was made direct to Wellesley, by the first minister of the court of Hyderabad. At a conference, held in the English camp, on the 24th of December, 1803, Mohiput Ram, the envoy of the Nizam, exhibited great anxiety to learn what districts would be assigned to his master. He was very urgent with Wellesley to obtain information on that point ; and when Sir Arthur declined to explain himself, he finished by offering him seven lacs of rupees (about 70,000*l.*). The general listened to the proposal with great gravity, and when the Indian had ceased to speak, said to him, " Can you keep a secret ? " Mohiput, hoping that he had succeeded, replied eagerly, " Certainly." " And so can I," said Sir Arthur, bowing to the minister. The saying deserves a place in history.

We quote these traits of disinterestedness, because the annals of India offer few examples of the kind, and because many writers have accused Wellesley of too great fondness for money. His whole life enters a protest against this charge ; he never laid himself out to become rich, and neglected, on the contrary, on more than one occasion, the legitimate means of adding to his fortune. If he acquired in the end large estates, it was because Great Britain rewards her generals otherwise than with crowns of laurel, and because no person ever offered to England a better opportunity of acting upon her own system than the victor of Assaye, of Salamanca, and of Waterloo.

The wars of India had furnished Wellesley with no opportunity of exhibiting the full measure of his knowledge in strategy and European tactics. The difficulty of these wars is occasioned rather by the nature of the country, the scarcity of supplies, and the number and description of the enemy's troops, than by the good condition of these troops, and the talents of the generals appointed to command them. But Wellesley's great merit consisted in this, that he not only overcame these difficulties, but made himself useful, over and above, by the reforms which he introduced into the military system of British India. The administration and organisation of the army had become exceedingly defective, and it abounded in glaring abuses. Wellesley endeavoured to root them out one after another, and though the interference proved to be a delicate one, he had the satisfaction of achieving some excellent results. With a view to promote discipline and good order, he punished severely every deviation from the rules of the service, and put a stop to many bad habits which the negligence of those in command had permitted to grow up. He seized every opportunity that presented itself, whether in peace or war, to train and discipline his troops, and to accustom them to fatigue and to the hard life of a camp. He improved in succession all the branches of the service, and applied himself particularly to systematise the employment of baggage-animals, so as to accelerate the movement of columns, and render them independent of magazines,—at all events during the continuance of an expedition. He introduced at the same time such notable modifications into the manner of feeding the troops as enabled him to dispense with some of the usual means of transport. He improved the bridge

equipments, and drew up with his own hand a code of instructions for the establishment of bridges of boats. He exhibited inflexible severity towards plunderers and marauders. He abolished the endless exemptions and privileges which had heretofore reduced too much the effective strength of the army in the hour of need. Finally, he took advantage of the Mahratta war to improve the means of communication, to obtain better intelligence, and to increase the regularity and, above all, the rapidity of marching.

"No one had ever seen," he writes to his brother, "or ever imagined, before that war, such marches as those which I executed when I determined to move upon Berar. I did not make less than from seventeen to twenty miles by measurement, and the day of the battle of Argaum, notwithstanding the excessive heat, I accomplished twenty-six miles."

This rapidity, which had never before been equalled in India, tended more than anything else to get rid of superfluous baggage.

To appreciate the changes which Wellesley introduced into the Indian army, it is necessary to understand that war is carried on in India very differently from war in Europe. The English soldiers are the only description of troops to whom the government issues provisions. The sepoys, four times more numerous than they, receive an equivalent in money, out of which they are obliged to provide for themselves. The consequence is, that the army must carry in its train a considerable body of merchants, workpeople, beasts of burden, and incumbrances of every sort. Bakers, butchers, sutlers, everything, in short, that is required in common life may be found in camp, besides a good deal which in other

countries would be called luxuries, — such as goats to supply milk for the officers' tea, and so forth. "An army," says Count de Warren, "has its bazaar; a regiment or company on march is provided in like manner; every officer carries with him, besides an immense quantity of baggage, a capacious tent, and all things necessary for his toilet, — a table, a bed, chairs, and not unfrequently a carriage." It is obvious that this system has undergone no change since the days of Xerxes and Darius.

That mass of individuals which in the day of battle is perfectly useless, but which it is absolutely necessary to protect, in order to avoid perishing by famine, deranges completely all the calculations of a European general, because not above a third part of the army, more or less, is able to fire a shot; while the smallest movement in retreat would deliver over all his supplies to the enemy.

In order to give an idea of the number of useless hands which accompany armies in India into the field, we have only to repeat, that General Harris, in his expedition against Mysore, in 1799, carried with him 35,000 combatants, with 120,000 followers; and that the Marquis of Hastings (at that time General Lord Moira) opened the campaign of 1817 with 610,000 men, of whom 500,000 were non-combatants. From the moment that he invaded the Mahratta territory, General Wellesley greatly reduced these impedimenta. He fixed rigorously the number of carriages for each regiment, and for each officer, and simplified in a noticeable manner the commissariat train, profiting by the experience which he had incidentally acquired in the war with Tippoo Saib.

There exist in India wandering merchants called Brinjarries, who trade exclusively in grain and provisions, and transport their stores in all directions upon the backs of oxen and camels. These Bohemians feed and lodge themselves like troops in a campaign. When Cornwallis found himself destitute in the heart of Mysore, he applied to them, and, thanks to their constantly increasing numbers, ample subsistence was furnished to him. Wellesley, fully appreciating the advantage of having always at his command these wandering merchants, who, to the means of rapid transport unite a perfect acquaintance with the country, and who have besides camps regularly pitched, which they defend, when need arises,—did not hesitate to make use of them in preference to an English commissariat. This reform, too little known, was the principal cause of the brilliant success which he obtained in the Mahratta war. General Nichols explains the manner in which Wellesley, after the battle of Assaye, contrived to attach these Brinjarries to himself, and to support his soldiers in the heart of a desert, where without that resource they would have perished through the negligence of their allies, to whom they trusted, and who left them destitute of all things.

It is worthy of remark that later Indian generals have returned, so to speak, to ancient errors; neglecting the Brinjarries, organising a commissariat of their own, and establishing large convoys. They have thus augmented luxury and good living, and rendered the army at once more numerous and more unwieldy than ever. Hence though the Indian forces have been tripled and quadrupled, they no longer obtain successes comparable to those achieved by Wellesley. But the most important

of all the improvements introduced by Sir Arthur into the military arrangements of India was, without doubt, the adoption of a mode of warfare more concentrated and pliable than it used to be. He substituted for small detached garrisons, *corps d'armée* in the field, and concentrations of troops in sufficient numbers to enable them to act at once with vigour and celerity.

It was in consequence of these well conducted reforms that Sir Arthur was able to accomplish with his army such exploits as had never before been witnessed in India. The victory of Assaye may perhaps be cited as the most remarkable in the annals of that country.

No doubt the battle of Plassey was gained by 4000 men only, of whom 2000 were sepoys; but in attacking 50,000 natives under the Soubah of Bengal, Lord Clive knew, upon the best authority, that almost the whole force would desert during the action. And the result justified that expectation. The defection of a part of the enemy's troops induced the flight of all the rest. There was scarcely any battle at all, and the proof is, that the English lost no more than fifty men. At the battle of Assaye, on the other hand, the fight was so sharp and obstinate, that of the Mahrattas 2000 were killed and 6000 wounded, while the British army, out of an effective total of 7500 men, had 2000 combatants placed *hors de combat.* It may therefore be affirmed, upon military grounds, that the expedition against the Mahrattas was the most remarkable which the English in India had yet undertaken. Wellesley showed himself upon that occasion to be at least equal to Clive, and superior to Lawrence, Smith, Coote, Harris, Cornwallis, Lake, and to almost all who had commanded troops in India before him.

Hindostan (Area 1,500,000 Sq. Miles)
Length 1500 Miles
Hindostan
Breadth 1300 Miles
England & Wales (Area nearly 58,000 Sq. Miles) Length 363 Miles
England & Wales Br.th 270 Miles
HINDOSTAN.
Reference to Colours
Andaman
Nine Degrees Channel
Eight Degrees Channel
Maldive I.
Laccadive I.
Pulo Penang
Longitude East 80 of Greenwich

CHAP. V.

RETURNED TO ENGLAND, WELLESLEY IS SELECTED FOR AN EXPEDITION TO HANOVER. — THE EXPEDITION COMES TO NOTHING.—SIR ARTHUR IS PUT IN CHARGE OF A BRIGADE AT HASTINGS. — HE ENTERS PARLIAMENT AS MEMBER FOR THE BOROUGH OF RYE. — IS APPOINTED CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE DUKE OF RICHMOND, LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND. — TAKES PART IN THE EXPEDITION AGAINST DENMARK. — BEATS THE ENEMY AT KIOGE. — NEGOTIATES THE SURRENDER OF COPENHAGEN.—RECEIVES THE THANKS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

At the moment when Wellesley quitted India, Napoleon was at Boulogne, making enormous preparations for a naval expedition. "During four weeks," says M. Thiers, "he hesitated between sending that expedition against India, and obtaining the command of the British Channel. The overthrow of the British empire in the peninsula of the Ganges presented to him such important results, that he seemed tempted by it to risk his person and his army in an effort to the full as hazardous as a descent upon the coast of England itself." Hence it had well nigh come to pass that Arthur Wellesley and Buonaparte should have encountered each other at the opposite extremity of the world, ten years before the memorable day when they fixed the destinies of Europe upon the plains of Waterloo. But whatever influence that fact might have exercised upon the progress of events, we must still believe that the success of Buonaparte in the East would not have retarded the inevitable and needful fall of the French empire. For that ill-

balanced Colossus resembled heavy weights, which, the higher you raise them the more their tendency to fall becomes sure and overwhelming.

It was in the month of September, 1805, that Wellesley, after an absence of nine years, returned to his native country, happy in the consciousness that he had pacified, aggrandised, and consolidated the vast empire of India. His arrival coincided with the renewal of the war against France, which was undertaken by the third European coalition. To that coalition England became a party. Hitherto she had mixed herself up with alliances of this description only so far as to supply the belligerents with ships and subsidies. The moment was approaching when her land army, heretofore classed among the contingents of the second or third order, was about to acquire a preponderating influence. Till that moment came, Wellesley enjoyed three years of comparative repose, which furnish us with few incidents that seem to deserve notice.

In November, 1805, he took part as a general of brigade in Lord Cathcart's expedition to Hanover. But the issue of the battle of Austerlitz rendered that expedition profitless, and the troops had scarcely touched the German shore when they were ordered to re-embark. On his return to England, Wellesley was appointed to train and discipline a brigade at Hastings, in the county of Sussex. Though such employment might have wounded the susceptibility of a general who had commanded 40,000 men in India, and received the thanks of parliament for his victories, Sir Arthur discharged the duty imposed upon him with scrupulous exactitude, and with a rare modesty which he carried with him into everything which he undertook.

In consequence of the death of Lord Cornwallis, Sir Arthur obtained, in June, 1806, the colonelcy of the 33rd Regiment of the line, in which he had served thirteen years as lieutenant-colonel. On the 10th of April, in the same year, he married Lady Catherine Pakenham, third daughter of the Earl of Longford, and a member of a very ancient and honourable English family. We have elsewhere explained how he became attached to that lady, when he was yet only a captain of infantry, and how their connection was opposed by Lord Longford, because of the inability of the young suitor adequately to support a wife. Though rejected by the father he still retained the affections of the daughter, and by and by proceeded to India a betrothed man. But he had not been gone many months ere a violent attack of small-pox deprived Lady Catherine of all her beauty, and in a noble spirit of disinterestedness she wrote to Wellesley, informing him of the circumstance, and releasing him from his engagement. Sir Arthur declined, like a true knight, to avail himself of her generosity, and in due time Lady Catherine Pakenham became Lady Catherine Wellesley.

Two children were the fruit of this marriage; one born on the 3rd of February, 1807, the other on the 16th of January, 1808. They both entered the service young, and each had attained, at the death of their father, to the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

It was in the course of 1806 that Wellesley took his seat in the British House of Commons, as representative of the borough of Rye.

He soon found an opportunity of distinguishing himself. Some restless members had undertaken to bring charges against the Marquis of Wellesley, for his con-

duct in India. At the head of this conspiracy was one Mr. Paul, who formally accused the late Governor-General of having spent, without the authority of the Company, a million and a half upon an unjust expedition; of having squandered annually 25,000 guineas for mere purposes of ostentation; and, finally, of having raised the debt from 11,035,648*l.* to 31,000,000*l.* Mr. Paul having been expelled from parliament before he could accomplish his purpose, Lord Folkestone, in March, 1808, renewed the attack, and the House, coming on that occasion to a division, passed a vote entirely favourable to the Marquis of Wellesley. Sir Arthur contributed not a little to this result by the straightforward and honest statements which he made. If he did not succeed in bringing the whole of England to his opinion, at all events he cleared the memory of his brother's government from every stain of reproach. He proved, among other things, that the marquis had increased the revenue of England in India from six to seven millions sterling, and this argument, which admitted of no reply, did not fail to produce a great effect.

The death of Fox, in September, 1806, brought about a change of administration, with the Duke of Portland at its head. The Duke of Richmond was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Wellesley, in the month of April, proceeded thither likewise as Chief Secretary. This important charge, by accepting which he became a privy councillor, demanded of him who held it much tact, firmness, and determination. Dissatisfied with the Union, and with the government of the Tories, Ireland had begun to agitate for Catholic emancipation; and public order was often disturbed by liberal

demonstrations. Sir Arthur applied himself to restrain excesses, and calm down the spirit of the people; a thankless undertaking, which, however, he happily accomplished, while at the same time he won the good-will of all parties. He introduced many useful reforms into the administration, among which may be cited,—"An improved Organisation of the Dublin Police," which not only produced excellent results at the time, but became, long afterwards, the model of that admirable police system for which England is indebted to Sir Robert Peel. The knowledge which he had acquired of the interests and wants of India enabled Wellesley also, during a period of military inaction, to render important services to that portion of the empire. It was particularly gratifying to him, that he succeeded in dissuading the minister from an absurd attempt to relieve a portion of the English troops in the eastern possessions by sending negro regiments thither, and in the West Indies, by replacing them with sepoys.

In 1807, Sir Arthur was called upon to take part in an unjust and deplorable expedition against Copenhagen. The expedition in question consisted of twenty-seven sail of the line, and a large number of other vessels, on board of which were embarked upwards of 20,000 troops. Lord Cathcart was commander-in-chief, Admiral Gambier directed the fleet, and Wellesley took the command of a division of infantry. Cathcart put to sea, keeping the object of his mission a profound secret. On the 4th of August the fleet cast anchor between the the Castle of Cronemberg and Copenhagen. Astonished as they were by such an unlooked-for apparition, the Danes still exhibited no uneasiness, because their feelings towards the English were of a friendly nature, and

their government was on the best terms with that of Great Britain. No great while elapsed, however, before the extent of their misfortune became apparent to them. The expeditionary army having been joined on the 12th by the German Legion of Pomerania, Lord Cathcart summoned the Danish government to deliver up to England, until the conclusion of a general peace, its fleet and maritime equipments. The prince royal firmly rejected the proposition, and determined to try the fate of arms, notwithstanding that the paucity and defective organisation of his troops held out to him no prospect of success. On the 16th, the English army landed between Elsinore and Copenhagen, and immediately advanced in three columns upon the Danish capital, while the fleet took measures to support, as far as it was able, the operations of the land army. On the 19th, Cathcart carried the post of Fredrickswerk, where he made 850 prisoners. Five days afterwards, his right wing invested the capital, and began the erection of two mortar batteries.

Meanwhile the Danes had collected their regular troops and militia under the orders of Lieutenant-General Castenskiold, at Rochild. Lord Cathcart, conceiving that this little army might interrupt the siege, and favour a general rising of the country, directed Wellesley, with a division of 4000 or 5000 men, to disperse it. Though the Danish troops amounted to 14,000 combatants, Castenskiold fell back on the approach of the English division upon Kioge, where he was able to present to the enemy a front protected by field works.

Having reconnoitred the position, Wellesley perceived that it gave to the Danes great advantages, and said to the officers who surrounded him, and exhibited

some signs of uneasiness, "Gentlemen, we shall have warm work here." Indeed, the very same day, the Danes debouched along the front of the English division, for they were animated by the best spirit, though consisting entirely of young soldiers. Wellesley attacked them vigorously, and after a short action put them to the rout. The Danes left a good many combatants, with six pieces of cannon, upon the field of battle, and lost about 1160 prisoners, of whom sixty were officers. After obtaining this result, General Wellesley advanced into the interior of the island, for the purpose of overawing and disarming the irregular troops. He acquitted himself throughout that difficult affair with great moderation and kindness. Indeed the Danes themselves are agreed, that he gave on that occasion new proofs of the spirit of justice and conciliation with which he had been animated in his dealings with the Hindoos, and which by and by he exhibited towards the inhabitants of the Peninsula and of France. His troops were kept in the most perfect state of order; not a single complaint was brought against them, and it might be said, that the unfortunate inhabitants of the rural districts found in Wellesley rather a protector than an enemy. He punished severely the slightest act of pillage, and obliged his soldiers to pay punctually for everything of which they stood in need.

Meanwhile Copenhagen, bombarded, from the evening of the 2nd, by the fleet and the land batteries, proposed on the afternoon of the 5th to capitulate. Lord Cathcart granted an armistice of twenty-four hours, and then appointed General Wellesley, Sir Home Popham, and Lieutenant-Colonel George Murray, to arrange the articles of capitulation. These articles were brought

into the camp in the night, between the 6th and 7th, and on the following day the ill-fated capital of Denmark fell into the hands of its perfidious enemies.

The town had suffered much; it was on fire in several places; but however great the damage might be, it fell far short of that which was sustained after the surrender of the place. The English sailors gave up to pillage many quarters of the town; they plundered the arsenals, ransacked the dockyards, and destroyed even the implements and machinery that are required in the construction of navies. Having completed this barbarous work, the fleet sailed for England, towing after it sixteen ships of the line, nine frigates, fourteen corvettes, and a great number of Danish vessels besides, loaded with masts, cordage, beams, and every other description of naval appointment. Public opinion expressed itself strongly against this violation of the neutrality of a friendly people, and it was not till after stormy debates that the ministry obtained a vote of thanks for the chiefs of the expeditionary army.

It is to be regretted, that in the correspondence of the Duke of Wellington, nothing occurs to inform us of the opinion which he entertained of this unjustifiable aggression upon Denmark. But the frank and loyal character of the man — his respect for law, and his scrupulous good faith, — all the acts, in short, of his life, and the numberless proofs of kindness and mercy which are furnished by his military career, justify us in believing that he disapproved, in his inner conscience, of the conduct of the English ministers on that occasion. His silence itself gives great support to this opinion; indeed, it has more than once been stated, that to the horror which he experienced when he saw the state to which

Copenhagen had been reduced, was in a great degree owing the resolution at which he arrived,—never to attack a fortified town by bombardment. Be this as it may, it is very certain that he afterwards acted in the spirit of this determination both in France and in the Peninsula. In spite of all the remonstrances which were made to him on the subject by officers under his command, he preferred rather to shed the blood of his own brave soldiers than to crush the peaceable inhabitants under the ruins of their burning houses.

CHAP. VI.

PROPHECY OF WILLIAM PITT. — CONDITION OF SPAIN. — NAPOLEON'S PROJECTS.—TREATY OF FONTAINEBLEAU.—INVASION AND CONQUEST OF PORTUGAL. — THE FRENCH ARMY TAKES POSSESSION OF SPANISH FORTRESSES. — COUP D'ÉTAT AT BAYONNE. — GENERAL INSURRECTION. —AFFAIR OF BAYLEN. — ASTURIAN DEPUTIES PROCEED TO LONDON. — WELLESLEY, WITH A CORPS OF 9000 MEN, IS ORDERED TO SUPPORT THE INSURGENTS. — OFFERS HIS SERVICES TO THE JUNTA OF CORUNNA AND IS REFUSED. — LANDS AT THE MOUTH OF THE MONDEGO. — DEFEAT OF LABORDE AT RORISSA, AND OF JUNOT AT VIMIERA. — CONVENTION OF CINTRA. — EVACUATION OF PORTUGAL BY THE FRENCH ARMY. — DISSATISFACTION WITH THE CONDUCT OF THE ALLIED GENERALS. — WELLESLEY'S EVIDENCE BEFORE A COURT OF INQUIRY. — JUSTICE IS DONE TO HIM, BUT THE GOVERNMENT, TO SATISFY PUBLIC OPINION, KEEP HIM IN ENGLAND WITH GENERALS BURRARD AND DALRYMPLE.

THE great struggle which changed the destinies of the world, and which began with the insurrection of the Spanish people, had been foretold, as if with the voice of prophecy, by the illustrious son of Chatham. This remarkable circumstance was communicated by Wellesley himself at a dinner given in 1816, by the Duc de Richelieu, to the diplomatic corps in Paris.

Towards the end of 1805, Pitt had gathered round him in the country certain statesmen and military men, among whom was Sir Arthur Wellesley, recently returned from India. During dinner, Pitt received intelligence of the capitulation of Mack, at Ulm, and the march of the Emperor upon Vienna. One of the

friends of the prime minister, on hearing of the reverse, exclaimed, "All is lost! there are no other means of opposing Napoleon." "You are mistaken," said Pitt; "there is yet hope, if I can succeed in stirring up a national war in Europe — a war which ought to begin in Spain." Pitt, seeing that his words had struck his hearers with astonishment, added, "Yes, gentlemen, Spain will be the first nation in which that war of patriotism shall be lighted up which alone can deliver Europe. My knowledge of that country, and it is very accurate, satisfies me, that if the nobles and the clergy be debased by bad government, and lie at the feet of the favourite, the people have preserved all their honour, all their sobriety, and all their hatred towards France — a hatred which is as keen as ever, and well nigh equals their love for their sovereigns. Buonaparte believes, and has good reason to believe, the continuance of these feelings to be incompatible with his designs upon Spain. He will endeavour to root them out, and it is to this attempt that I look for the war which I so eagerly desire to see kindled." In comparing these remarkable words with the first instructions issued by the Emperor for the war in the Peninsula, we are struck by the superior intelligence and profound views which the illustrious chief of the English Cabinet entertained upon that subject.

After having dissolved, by his brilliant victories, the third European coalition, Napoleon, assured of the alliance with Russia, and little disturbed by the disposition of England, from whose policy he had nothing to fear, turned a covetous glance towards the Iberian Peninsula, to which, up to the present moment, he had paid no fixed attention. For some time back he had

entertained the project, if not of dethroning the families of Bourbon and Braganza, at all events of extending over their dominions the fatal protection of his own government. The treaty of Ildefonso was the first step in this direction; but Godoy, secretly chafed at having been obliged to sign that humiliating agreement, determined to seize the earliest favourable opportunity of vindicating his self-respect. The consequence was that he concluded, not long afterwards, a secret treaty with Baron Strogonoff, a treaty which was likewise signed by the Portuguese ambassador, and in virtue of which the two kingdoms of the Peninsula undertook to declare war against France as soon as her armies should become involved in hostilities with the Emperor of Russia.

In order to carry into execution this plan, Godoy put forth a proclamation, in which he called to arms all good and loyal Spaniards. This deed made its appearance at the very moment when Napoleon was opening the campaign of 1806 against Prussia.

Baron Strogonoff and the Portuguese ambassador, considering the measure to be imprudent, were obliged to declare that they had nothing in the world to say to it; and Godoy, seeing himself isolated in consequence, hastened to make the most humiliating submissions to the Emperor. But the blow was struck. That act of treason, and the recollection of the insult which Portugal had formerly offered to the Republic by joining her squadron to the English fleet in the Mediterranean, stirred up in the mind of Napoleon thoughts of vengeance, which policy urged him to turn to the account of his ambition. The moment appeared to him favourable, after the conclusion of the treaty of Tilsit, for establishing the supremacy of France over the Penin-

sula. And it was the more to be desired, because Great Britain, already very influential, might succeed sooner or later in acquiring sufficient ascendency there, to destroy altogether, not only the continental system, but the maritime power of the empire besides. This, with other reasons, urged Napoleon to begin at once the execution of a project which, though as yet badly digested, had been long firmly settled in his vast understanding.

The Bourbons of Madrid were plunged into the depths of effeminacy. A *ci-devant garde-du-corps* had become the favourite of an immodest queen, and of the despicable chief of the Spanish monarchy. An imbecile monarch, covering with his protection that wretched instrument of his dishonour, because he relieved him from the cares of government; and in the same family a prince, astute and cunning, who treated with equal contempt the King, the Queen, and Godoy;—a nation, corrupt, yet sufficiently noble, notwithstanding its corruption, to blush for the scandal and disgrace of its court;—a populace, loyal, faithful, attached to its sovereigns, docile in its servitude, yet terrible in its anger,—secretly agitated by a thirst for employment, and for reforms which the higher classes, either through pride or ignorance, obstinately refused to comprehend;—finances dilapidated;—an administration incapable and without vigour;—a marine decayed; colonies upon the point of revolting; an army neglected; arsenals empty; no foresight, no dignity in the superior classes, and in the lower orders of society stupid rumours, violent passions, inveterate hatreds, which the warmth of the Spanish blood might at any moment render ferocious;—such was, at this time, the condition of the

Peninsula. To aim at the social regeneration of a country so miserable and so degraded was certainly an enterprise not wanting in grandeur; but how was the work to be brought to a good issue, without abandoning the advantages which were sought for France, without goading the people into a general insurrection? There lay the great, and perhaps the insurmountable difficulty. Wherefore the Emperor remained a long time irresolute as to the part which it would be most advantageous to assume.

That the discreditable violence committed by England upon Copenhagen may have originated in his mind the thought of pursuing in the Spanish peninsula a similar course, is certainly possible. It is possible, also, that his reasoning, at least in the first instance, may have been rather general than special. He may have considered himself justified, by the example thus set, in acting not towards England only, but towards all the sovereigns of Europe who favoured her views, exactly as he pleased. In either case the fact remains the same; that a policy, not unjust in principle, though rendered so by want of judgment, in the use of means of which reason and equity alike disapprove, led the French armies to Lisbon; and placed in the hands of Napoleon a sceptre which the House of Braganza had alone the right to wield, but which its disgraceful flight showed that it was not worthy to bear.

To afford some pretext for his aggression, the Emperor had communicated to the Prince Regent of Portugal, that on the 1st of September, 1807, he must choose between a complete rupture with England and the occupation of his country by a French army; that he must, besides, unite the Portuguese squadron with

those of the other continental powers, to crush the common enemy; that he must order the confiscation of all English merchandise, and arrest and keep as hostages such subjects of His Britannic Majesty as were settled in Portugal. The Spanish envoy, who was negotiating at the moment a treaty with Napoleon, put his hand to this iniquitous act, and soon found reason to repent it.

The Prince Regent of Portugal promised the support of his fleet, but refused to accede to the two other conditions. Napoleon expected this refusal, and indeed desired it. As soon as he was made aware of it, he commanded Junot to enter Spain, though the convention, by which the right of passage was to be conceded to him, had not yet been signed. This convention, indeed, which was added to the secret treaty of Fontainebleau, bears date the 27th of October, and on the 18th Junot had already crossed the Bidassoa. His instructions were precise, and left no doubt as to the designs of the Emperor; they directed him to push on with as much haste as possible, in order to give to the invasion of Portugal the character of a surprise. Junot was not neglectful of this recommendation. He quitted Salamanca on the 12th November, and arrived on the 23rd at Abrantes.

As soon as the Prince Regent became aware that the French had passed the Portuguese frontier, a panic of fear fell upon him. Hoping to avert the storm, he accepted every condition which he had previously rejected. He gave orders to seize all the English merchandise, and to arrest all the British subjects which could be found in Portugal; a vain and base concession, which did not stay the progress of events for one moment. On the 30th of November the French army entered Lisbon without firing a shot, and the family of Braganza,

which might have defended its throne with good prospect of success, had recourse to the wretched expedient of fleeing with its treasures and its courtiers.

However well disposed to the English this family might be, and however ready to betray France at any moment, it had yet submitted in the end to all Napoleon's requirements. There was, therefore, no excuse for overturning it. But we can easily understand that it did not suit the Emperor's convenience to treat with it at all, or to renounce, because of such tardy concessions, the plans which he had formed.

The opinion entertained by Wellesley on this subject was, that the invasion of Portugal originated not so much in vast political designs, as in the desire to create new resources for the French army, by plundering the country and seizing the treasures of the crown, as well as the whole of the naval resources which had been accumulated during fifteen years of peace. M. Thiers seems to corroborate this view of the case when he says, "Junot received orders to accelerate his speed, and to spare neither fatigue nor privations to his soldiers, so that he might but arrive in time to surprise, not the royal family, about which the Emperor cared nothing, but the Portuguese fleet, and the immense wealth which belonged to English merchants." However this may be, the conduct of the chief of the French nation towards the House of Braganza was marked throughout with the most revolting injustice. It excited universal reprobation, less bitter however, and less merited, than that with which the whole of Europe received intelligence of the fall of the Bourbons at Madrid.

Towards Portugal Napoleon had been only violent; towards Spain he showed himself cunning, crafty, and

below the rank which his genius and position as the sovereign of a powerful empire had assigned to him. Aware of the dissensions which prevailed at the court of Madrid, he resolved to make them subservient to his own purposes; and, playing the part of an interested or perfidious arbitrator, not to give a decision in favour of any party till circumstances should have suggested to him how definitively to proceed.

Three lines of action were before him from which to choose—all equally unjust, yet not all equally favourable to the success of his policy. First, he might overturn the favourite without imposing any other sacrifice upon the crown; while at the same time he appealed to the self-love and interests of the nation, already well disposed to such an act of vigour, by uniting Portugal with Spain. The support of Ferdinand could at the same time be secured, by bestowing upon him the hand of a princess of the House of Buonaparte; for such an alliance had more than once been solicited both by the prince and his father. The second plan, to which Talleyrand gave a preference little to be justified, consisted in making the same arrangements, with a stipulation that there should be ceded to France all the territory as far as the banks of the Ebro, the coasts of Catalonia, and a joint possession of the Spanish colonies. Finally, the third project, to which Napoleon, in spite of the sagacious advice of Cambacères, inclined from the outset, was to dethrone the Bourbons, and replace them by a new dynasty, from which no territorial sacrifice should be exacted. After grave consideration, the Emperor pronounced in favour of this last plan; more radical, but much less just and prudent than either of the others, and especially than the first. Always misled by that fear or hatred of the Bourbons which had in-

duced him to commit an act of assassination at Vincennes, he did not believe that it would be possible to attach Spain to himself, or to govern the empire, without expelling from the last throne which they still occupied in Europe, the members of that illustrious and unfortunate family. But this was not the only consideration which induced him to commit so grave a fault, and such a lamentable act of injustice. For a long time back he had yielded to the fatal determination of giving thrones to all the members of the Buonaparte family; and perhaps also to the desire of reinaugurating the policy of Louis XIV., by uniting in the same bond of interest, France, Spain, and Italy, and arraying them in alliance against the Northern Courts and the naval power of England. Such a policy was worth avowing; it was even grand, and worthy of the victor of Austerlitz. But it ought to have depended for its development on other means than guile, and not been entered upon at a moment when France was compelled to keep 300,000 men between the Oder and the Vistula, to insure the submission of Germany and the alliance of Russia; besides 120,000 more in Italy, to hinder Austria from repassing the Alps.

It is well known through what a series of intrigues and acts of treachery the Emperor entered upon the execution of that device, which M. Thiers has pronounced to be worthy of the cunning of the fifteenth century; and how, under the pretext of insuring the fulfilment of the secret treaty of Fontainebleau, and of watching the English on the side of Gibraltar and Cadiz, he caused his columns to penetrate into Spain, to surprise a great number of fortresses, and to plant their victorious standards upon the towers of Madrid. So

far, by putting on the most friendly appearances; — by declaring himself openly the protector of the nation and arbitrator among the members of the royal family,—by flattering all parties and exciting in each the hope that he would regard it with special favour, he succeeded, in spite of the suspicions with which the Spanish people regarded the entrance of French troops into their country, in disarming resistance. But the conduct of Murat, his marked coldness towards Ferdinand the Second, whom the troubles of Aranjuez had raised to the throne, his regard for Charles the Fourth, and for his queen and Godoy, whom popular vengeance had followed even to their retreat, soon began to awaken serious doubts of the good intentions and sincerity of the French emperor. Nevertheless, it was required, in order to open all eyes, and to change into formidable opposition the careless confidence of the Spanish people, that Napoleon, by a stroke of Machiavellism to which there is no parallel, should remove the whole of the royal family to Bayonne; —and there, making the basest use of his power, should place upon the head of his brother the crown of Charles the Fifth and of Philip the Second, snatched from the hands of its legitimate possessors.

When this dark *coup d'état*, in which the Grand Duke of Berg and Savory took part, became officially known, it excited in Spain and throughout the whole world the keenest and most merited reprobation. The Colossus had made himself a dwarf; Cæsar had stooped down to the level of Borgia, and imprinted an indelible stain upon his own forehead.

History records some atrocious acts, which have led to results at once useful and enduring. The execution of the unfortunate Charles the First, for example,

brought about a dictatorship which laid the foundations of the maritime and continental power of Great Britain. Seeing the great things which he had realised, Cromwell might, for a moment, believe himself in the right; but the conscience of Napoleon never afforded him this consolation, and he has brought the charge against himself, that, by his policy towards Spain, he sapped the foundations of his own empire. "Mistakes," said he, one day, "are worse than crimes." Now the *coup d'état* at Bayonne was at once a crime and a mistake. It destroyed the prestige of his glory, it rendered him odious to the Spanish people, and opened under his feet an abyss, in which both France and himself were, by and by, to be swallowed up together.

It was on the 2nd of May, viz., three days before the signature of the treaty of abdication, that the inhabitants of Madrid rose to prevent the departure of the royal children, and a terrible *émeute* caused the streets of the capital to run with blood. Murat, however, succeeded in establishing order, but he stained his victory with such unnecessary rigour that Joseph himself interfered to repress its severity. The news of this murderous insurrection, together with sad rumours of the mysterious abdication at Bayonne, passed like lightning through the Peninsula, and rendered inevitable a general revolt.

Carthagena in the east, and Oviedo in the west, gave, on the 22nd of May, the signal of insurrection. Galicia and Andalusia rose almost on the same day; and the whole of Spain, as if a train of gunpowder had been laid across its provinces, took fire with a rapidity to which history presents no parallel. Never had the rising of a great people been more general and more spontaneous. All the physical force of Spain joined in

one burst of patriotism against the most odious of aggressions, and the resistance was so energetic, so prompt, and, in its effects, so terrible, that it rendered abortive the profound combinations by which Napoleon flattered himself that he had mastered insurrection and rendered powerless the few regular troops which remained in Spain.

The internal condition of the Peninsula was singularly favourable to a movement of the sort. The people, trodden for two centuries under the feet of despotism, were still submissive to the influence of the nobles and priests. These took clever advantage of the ignorance and credulity of their countrymen, and finding their own interests menaced by the introduction of French opinions, placed themselves in the front of the movement, in perfect assurance of being able to draw the masses after them. The proceedings of the priests were above all influential. They were the most active agents and real leaders of the revolt. They gave and transmitted orders, superintended the execution of them, carefully concealed the defeats of the national troops, exaggerated the smallest successes obtained over the enemy, and sometimes went so far as even to invent victories. They did not hesitate, in the interest of the national cause, to spread false intelligence, to preach hatred, and encourage horrible reprisals. They were at once the missionaries and staff-officers of the crusade. They hindered the peasantry and lower classes from seeing the advantages which would have arisen from the reforms promised by France. They made them believe that Godoy was the cause of all the evil, and that Ferdinand alone could save Spain. The absence of publicity and of rapid means of communication favoured these

manœuvres. News arrived everywhere at long intervals, and, coming almost always through the medium of leaders, were subject to notable alterations. It was, besides, easy to form camps and concentrate troops in a country of which the inhabitants always carry arms, and live without any hesitation in the open air. Sober, active, careless, prompt to be inflamed, terrible, and persevering in their hatreds, the Spaniards are peculiarly qualified for a war of defence. Their soil itself offers remarkable facilities for the continued maintenance of such a war. In some of the provinces, bands of a thousand strong, badly armed and badly fed, were able to continue almost indefinitely the pursuit of a numerous army, and to expose it all the while to serious dangers. Accordingly, the insurrection had hardly broken out ere the detached corps of the French army saw themselves suddenly cut off from their communications and from their depôts. Duhesme vainly attempted to make himself master by assault of Saragossa, Manresa, and Girona; Reille failed in a similar attack upon Rosas; Moncey was repulsed; and General Dupont, the unhappy victim of a moment of weakness, and of an unlooked-for concurrence of unfavourable circumstances, laid down his arms to the insurrectionary troops of Reding and Castaños. Finally, the capital of Arragon, so justly celebrated, sustained one siege of two months against the army of Lefevre, — the happy prelude of another, which recalls to our recollection those of Numantia, Seguntum, and Jerusalem, and which could not be surpassed, in our opinion, except by the heroic defence of Girona. Meanwhile, at Cadiz, Admiral Rosily found himself under the stern necessity of surrendering his squadron, on the sole condition that life

would be spared; and, to crown all these disasters, King Joseph, after occupying the throne barely ten days, was compelled to abandon his capital, to order the siege of Saragossa, now just approaching its termination, to be raised, and to stop Bessières in his victorious march. In a word, the break-up was so rapid, that by the middle of August the south of Spain was evacuated; the capital of Arragon freed; the army of Catalonia, the only one which had not suffered a reverse, shut up in Barcelona by the Miquelets and the British fleet; the corps of Dupont consigned to a frightful captivity; and all the rest of the troops cantoned on the further side of the Ebro, where they were far indeed from believing themselves to be safe.

The recoil of these events was felt in Portugal. In the month of June a junta was formed in Oporto, which, having the bishop at its head, exercised sovereign authority over the northern provinces. One of the first acts of that assembly was to open negotiations with England; after which, it concluded with Galicia a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive. From the north the movement extended to the south, and the situation of Junot became so serious that he was obliged, for his own security, to disarm and make prisoners of the Spanish soldiers, who, in terms of the treaty of Fontainebleau, had been placed under his command.

Napoleon had not anticipated this general insurrection in the Peninsula. Blinded by his ambition, he had replied to those who endeavoured to make him comprehend the possibility of such resistance, "There is nothing to fear from a nation brutalised by the monks and the Inquisition." The facility with which he made

himself master of various strongholds, and of Madrid, had confirmed him in this opinion; but his language soon underwent a change. On the 29th of March, ten days after the troubles of Aranjuez commenced, he wrote to Murat, "This affair has strangely complicated events; I am in great perplexity." We may well believe this. The force sent into the Peninsula had proved inadequate to resist a general revolt; and that circumstance, joined to many others, might decide the cabinet of London to take part in the struggle, and overcome the last scruples of Austria, who waited only for an opportunity to ally herself openly with Great Britain. If he had foreseen this formidable explosion, Napoleon would have recoiled without doubt from the *coup d'état* at Bayonne, and treated with greater delicacy that "nation of monks" which was destined to become the primary cause of his own downfall. Now he dreaded the war, and sought to avoid it, when the event had already become inevitable. On the 14th of March, 1808, he wrote to Murat, "I trust the war will not last long; indeed I have this matter very much at heart." Yet, with strange inconsistency, he was conducting at the very moment the odious intrigue which had for its object to hurl from the throne the whole family of Charles IV., and to push to extremities the exasperation of the Spanish people.

The spontaneous rise of that people would have been the grandest and most majestic upon record, but for the horrible excesses which tarnished the renown of their first victories. At Villa Franca, at Valladolid, at Seville, Cordova, Malaga, Grenada, and Badajos,—at Valencia, Cadiz, Placencia, Carthagena, and many other cities, a triumphant mob, with patriotic cries upon their

lips, showed themselves as ferocious as had been the executioners of royalty in 1793. The most distinguished citizens and general officers, those most capable of organising the insurrectionary forces, such as Filangieri, Solano del Aquila, Torre del Fresno, Francesco de Borgia, Don Miguel de Cavallos, and many others, were massacred, merely because they did not share the blind confidence and boasting of madmen, who believed, after the affair of Baylen, that they would have no further trouble either with the French army or with the Emperor Napoleon himself.

At Cordova, a fanatical monk, named Calvo, caused 330 Frenchmen, who had long dwelt peaceably in the city, to be strangled in one night. It is just to observe, however, that the majority of the citizens lamented these excesses, and that as soon as order was re-established, the murderers were given up to punishment.

Meanwhile the important results actually obtained by the insurrection, and the arrival in London of two deputies, commissioned by the Junta of Asturias, to ask for succour in arms and money, induced Great Britain, long undecided, to give a vigorous support to the movement. She looked less indeed to the defence of a principle than to the establishment of an alliance against the Emperor. "Spain was invaded," says Napier, "because she formed a portion of the great aristocracy of Europe; and she was delivered, because England supplied that aristocracy with the means of achieving a momentary triumph over the principles of the French Revolution."

At first Great Britain proposed to limit her exertions in favour of the Peninsula to a diversion similar to those which had been effected at the Helder, in Saint Domingo, at Quiberon, Ferol, Otranto, and Stralsund.

But scarcely were orders issued for the embarkation of 9000 men, already assembled at Cork, and destined for South America, when the Duke of Portland saw how necessary it would be to throw his whole strength into the arena, and greatly to increase a force, which had been collected for a minor purpose. He was kept up to this purpose by the pressure of public opinion, which showed itself more and more favourable to the Spaniards; and by the energetic representations in Parliament of Sheridan and Wyndham, who inveighed against the Liliputian expeditions heretofore undertaken by Tory ministers. Statesmen of all parties began indeed to see that the insurrectionary movement in the Peninsula offered to the policy of England such chances of success as had not been presented by any former diversions in her favour; for never before had Great Britain been supported against Napoleon by popular feeling and religious fanaticism, both violently excited.

At the period of Wellesley's embarkation with the first division of expeditionary troops, both the government and people of England were impressed with very mistaken ideas of the condition of the Peninsula. They believed that the country was thoroughly organised for war; they were full of confidence respecting its enthusiasm, and discussed the chances of victory almost without taking into account the immense resources which the peace of Tilsit had placed at the disposal of the Emperor. The Spaniards, by their boasting, confirmed this erroneous impression, which the want of all concert and unity of action among the executive authorities rendered extremely dangerous. Having no acquaintance whatever with war and its requirements, the cabinet of London lavished immense sums among juntas,

local authorities, and a heap of obscure agents, not one of whose reports was deserving of the slightest credit. On the faith of inaccurate statements, and carried away perhaps at the same time by the bent of its own wishes, it imagined that the Spanish armies were formidable, the French Generals dissatisfied, and their soldiers on the brink of a great mutiny. The same recklessness and indecision manifested themselves when the question of armed interference in the affairs of the Peninsula came to be agitated. Instead of concentrating all its disposable forces, and encouraging the nation by one decisive blow, the English government persisted in keeping its regiments dispersed. Ten thousand men, under the orders of General Moore, had been sent uselessly to Sweden, to support the king in his quarrel with Russia. Gibraltar was crowded with troops, to as little purpose, and General Spencer's division, without any fixed object in view, was passing constantly to and fro between Ceuta, Lisbon, and Cadiz. To all these difficulties were to be added, the inexperience of the army itself, and the total want of confidence by the English nation in the success of any continental struggle. In spite of the admitted improvements which the Duke of York had introduced into its discipline and organisation, there were still many considerations, which created in the minister a disinclination to launch the English army upon the vast theatre of the Peninsula. "It was doubted," says Lord Londonderry, "whether among our own generals there could be found any capable of opposing the experienced and skilful warriors of France. We had never been accustomed to carry on war upon a large scale except in India; and in India, it was believed, for the successful conduct of a campaign, talents of the first order were

hardly required. In the next place, it was not considered either prudent or just to push a handful of British troops into the heart of Europe, where, at a distance from the sea, and cut off from all communication with their own country, they might be compromised at any moment, either through the imbecility or treachery of our ally."

Nor, in truth, were examples wanting to justify these apprehensions. Indeed, if we except the short campaign of Egypt, and the isolated, though brilliant affair of Maida, the whole period between 1793 and the commencement of the peninsular war, had supplied no single deed of arms worthy of the ancient renown of Great Britain; for neither the conquest of a few West India islands, nor the capture of Toulon, abandoned almost immediately afterwards, nor the battles in France and at the Texel, nor the reduction of Copenhagen itself, could with justice be said to have added any new lustre to the military reputation of England.

The projected expedition sailed from Cork on the 12th of July. It consisted of 9000 men only. On Lord Castlereagh's recommendation, the command was entrusted to Wellesley; but other instructions, written on the same day, gave to General Spencer the right, without reference to Wellesley, to commence operations wherever he chose in the south; and authorised Admiral Purvis to engage in any enterprise, and even to dispose of a part of Sir Arthur's troops, should he consider the arrangement desirable. The consequence of this diversity of instructions was, that no single officer, naval or military, knew exactly what he was authorised to do. For the orders were vague and loose, instructing the chief of the expedition only thus far,

that he was expected to act in Portugal, and to give support to the Spanish insurrection.

Meanwhile the flotilla was barely at sea, when Lord Castlereagh, with an inconsistency more serious than all the rest, superseded Wellesley by Dalrymple, and assigned to him the fourth place in an army, for the command of which he had received, five days previously, detailed instructions. General Moore was at the same time placed, with palpable injustice, under the orders of Sir Harry Burrard, who was notoriously inferior to him in capacity and military experience. Thus two men, absolutely unknown in comparison with Wellesley and Moore, set aside the only English generals whose talents had been tried in the management of troops, and who had shown themselves worthy of confidence.

The instructions communicated by the minister being based upon mistaken views and inaccurate information, were all at variance with the ordinary rules of art, and, which is more inconceivable still, were full of self-contradictions. Thus, on the 15th of July, the very day on which Dalrymple was nominated to the chief command, Castlereagh wrote to Wellesley: "It appears to His Majesty, that the attack by the Tagus should be considered as the principal object to be kept in view." Yet he ends his letter by saying, "If Cadiz is seriously menaced, it will be the duty of the officer commanding in the Tagus to detach, upon a requisition made to him, a force sufficient to put that important place out of danger, even though by so doing he should be obliged to suspend for a time his operations in the Tagus." The occupation of Cadiz was at that time the favourite project of the minister. He did not comprehend how, without holding that place, it could be possible to or-

ganise the defence of the Peninsula. It was fortunate that Wellesley took a different view of the subject. With his sound judgment and eagle glance, he had seen from the outset how difficult, perhaps impossible, it would be to form any settled establishments in the neighbourhood of a city, where parties were in a state of open hostility towards each other, and all equally ill disposed towards England. It appeared, therefore, to him, more desirable to establish a good base in Portugal, in some position which, while it threatened the flank of the French lines of operations, would enable the fleet to give effectual support to the land forces. We shall see, by and by, how fully this idea was realised, and how it became the chief cause of success in the war.

At the period of Wellesley's embarkation, the French army, amounting to about 120,000 men, occupied all the strong places in Portugal, and a considerable number of those in Spain. The English army, about the same time, did not exceed in all 30,000 men, and was scattered over the whole coast of the Peninsula, from Gibraltar to the Bay of Biscay. It had, besides, no reserve, and must necessarily act upon a double line. The French, on the contrary, had a good reserve at Bayonne; a system of operations arranged by the greatest general of the age; and a strong army of 400,000 veteran soldiers, ready to support the troops in the Peninsula should circumstances require. "Fortunately, the plan of the English minister was not followed by the generals charged with the execution of it. Many causes combined to bring about this result: first, the catastrophe of Baylen, which deranged all the grand combinations of the Emperor; next, accident, which brought together the scattered divisions of the

British army; and lastly, the vigour and decision of Sir Arthur Wellesley, who knew, that in setting aside these miserable projects, he would obtain all the success which the stupidity of the cabinet would permit." *

The day after the fleet had gone to sea, Wellesley, who was on board the "Crocodile" proceeded in advance to concert measures with the juntas, and to select a proper point for the disembarkation of his troops. He arrived on the 20th of July at Corunna, where he ascertained the result of the battle which had been fought at Rio Seco on the 14th. Perceiving that the junta was in a state of consternation from that check, he made an immediate offer of his services. He could not have done so at a happier moment. Nevertheless, the junta declined them, professing that they needed no assistance, except in money and stores. "This refusal," says the Count Toreno, "proceeded from a certain national pride, honourable, no doubt, but not very wise, inasmuch as it had no ground of experience to rest upon. Besides, the English troops had fallen into discredit, because, ever since the commencement of the French Revolution, their expeditions had proved invariably unfortunate." We cannot quite agree with this statement. We are rather inclined to believe that the hot-headed and violent men who managed the junta refused the assistance of Great Britain, either because they reposed no confidence in the army of an aristocratic government, or else, because the exalted opinion which they entertained of the bravery and steadiness of the Spanish troops prevented them from feeling that its services could be at all required.

* Napier.

Be this as it may, Wellesley soon discovered that nothing was to be done with the Asturian and Galician authorities, and took his course to Oporto. There he learned, from a Colonel Browne, that the Portuguese army, of which he had received such pompous descriptions, consisted of no more than about 6500 badly equipped soldiers, with ten or twelve thousand unarmed peasants, concentrated upon the Mondego. To this first disappointment succeeded a number of reports equally mendacious, which left no doubt on Wellesley's mind that the affairs of the Peninsula were in the greatest confusion; that the insurrectionary troops were destitute both of arms and discipline; that their organisation was detestable; their very numbers far inferior to what had been represented; and their leaders as ignorant as they were full of presumption.

The popular enthusiasm, also, was far from answering to the high opinion which had been entertained of it. No doubt it showed itself with great violence in some of the large towns, but in most of the rural districts, and even in some entire provinces, no trace of it whatever could be found. And, to crown all, English intervention, instead of exciting the sympathy of the Spaniards, appeared to them in the light of a humiliation. The generals themselves shared in this sentiment, notwithstanding that they were incapable of saving the country by its own resources, and had approved of the appeal made by the juntas to the government of His Britannic Majesty. Hence Castaños, the most moderate and able among them, in a speech which he addressed to the French officers after the affair at Baylen, said in explicit terms, "Let not Napoleon persevere in aiming at a conquest which is

unattainable. Let him not force us into the arms of the English. They are hateful to us, and up to the present moment we have rejected their proffered succours."

The condition of Portugal was less unfavourable. The project of partition entertained by the Emperor had stirred against him the national feeling, which was still more influenced by the manner in which the French carried on the war; by the arrogance of Junot, and by the bloody executions which had followed the first acts of the revolt. The sack of Evora, by General Loison, excited universal exasperation. Nevertheless, the Portuguese insurrection would have been easily suppressed, had not the arrival of Wellesley, coincident with the report of certain advantages obtained by the Spaniards, revived, in good time, the people's hopes, and strengthened their fading courage.

General Junot, whom these victories, and especially the insurrection in Estremadura, had cut off from communicating with the French troops in La Mancha, found himself in a situation of great difficulty. His army, about 26,000 strong, besides being weakened by numerous detachments, was composed of soldiers much less experienced than those of the other corps. All these considerations, and still more, the nature of the ground, and the advantageous position of Portugal itself, determined Wellesley to fix in that country the base of his operations.

The first intelligence which he received convinced him that a descent at the mouth of the Tagus could not be effected. Another project suggested by the minister, namely, a disembarkation in the south, and a joint movement with General Spencer against Dupont's

troops, offered still fewer chances of success; because Bessières, menacing the north of Portugal, and Junot, occupying Lisbon upon the flank of the English army (parallel with the frontier), could at any moment compromise his line, or else necessitate the presence of an army of observation upon the Guadiana. The Spaniards, moreover, under the influence of exaggerated mistrust, refused to admit English troops into Cadiz; so that Wellesley would find himself in the south, without a place of arms, and destitute of a base upon which to lean. Under all these circumstances, it became necessary to find a place of debarkation convenient for acting in the north; and, after brief consultation with Admiral Cotton, he made choice of the mouth of the Mondego. Spencer received orders to repair thither without delay. Meanwhile he himself made preparations to land the English troops, with a view to get them into good order, and to reassure the Portuguese, who had begun to experience some alarm from seeing them remain so long on board ship. But at the moment when he was beginning to carry his designs into execution, Wellesley received a letter, dated the 15th of July, in which Lord Castlereagh announced to him the arrival of reinforcements, and the nomination of Dalrymple to assume the chief command. This intelligence annoyed him, but did not relax for a moment his zeal or devotion. "Whether I command or do not command in this expedition," he writes to the minister, "I shall do my best to render it successful; the government must then decide in what manner it chooses to employ me, whether here or somewhere else."

Wellesley was as yet ignorant of the affair of Baylen, which was communicated to him while making his pre-

parations to land. Appreciating with his usual sagacity all the consequences of that unlooked for triumph, he did not hesitate to open the campaign, without waiting for Spencer, or for the 15,000 men, whom Generals Moore, Auckland, and Anstruther were directed to bring with them. This determination was indicative of the calm and decided firmness of his character. For if, on the one hand, he was satisfied that the defeat of Dupont would hinder Bessières from entering Portugal, on the other, the information which he received described Junot as having available 16,000 or 18,000 men. And this number, though under the truth, was sufficient to make the boldest general pause. The result was, that Sir Arthur disembarked with 9000 men, having no assurance that the fleet could remain a single day at so dangerous an anchorage, though he knew that another chief would profit by his success, if he obtained any, and that a single reverse would ruin him in the opinion of the English people, already disposed to undervalue the ability of a mere general of sepoys.

The process of disembarking was tedious and difficult. It began on the 1st of August, and continued till the 5th. By the strangest accident, Spencer, who had received no despatch from Wellesley, arrived on the 3rd. This reinforcement raised the effective strength of the British army to 12,300 men. But the General-in-Chief was not slow in perceiving that he could count little upon support from the insurrection, and this circumstance, as well as the numerical weakness of his cavalry, obliged him to arrange his movements with much circumspection. Besides, there was a necessity, before commencing his march, to effect a considerable remount, and to collect means of transport sufficient for his

baggage, stores, &c. Now such was the want of administrative ability in his staff*, that he found himself, in spite of all his activity, in no condition to move earlier than the 8th. A sufficient answer to General Thiebault, who reproaches him with having, by his slowness, permitted the French troops to concentrate themselves, and render, thereby, the chances of ultimate success more equal.

Anticipating the arrival of the English, Junot sent forward Laborde with 5000 bayonets, 500 horse, and five pieces of artillery, to watch them, and to cover the march of Loison, whom he had ordered to rejoin him at Leyria. The point of concentration was not sufficiently withdrawn. Wellesley reached it time enough to cut the line of communication between the two corps, to occasion to Loison the loss of several forced marches, and to compel Laborde to risk a battle with his inadequate force. Besides, Don Bernardin Freire was at Leyria, with five or six thousand Portuguese. It was natural to suppose that this force would hasten to form a junction with the British army. But it did nothing of the sort. Freire was anxious that Sir Arthur should abandon the coast, advance into the heart of Beira, and open there an offensive campaign. He offered, in the event of the adoption of this plan, an abundant supply of provisions. But the English general refused to change his line of operations, because he considered it dangerous to separate himself too

* "I have had the greatest difficulty in organising my commissariat for the march. . . This department deserves your serious attention. The existence of the army depends upon it, and yet the people who manage it are incapable of managing any thing out of a counting-house."—*Letter to Lord Castlereagh, Aug.* 8. 1808.

much from the fleet. The consequence was that Freire positively refused to move unless the English commissariat would engage to support his troops during the entire campaign. Now Wellesley found himself quite unable to accede to this proposal, which was the more unreasonable, that the Portuguese general had already seized the stock of provisions which, through the exertions of the Bishop of Oporto, had been collected for the use of the English army. To his entreaty that Freire would support him in any manner most agreeable to himself, the only answer which he received was, that Freire was about to retire behind the line of the Tagus and undertake operations of his own. Jealousy or want of confidence could alone explain such conduct; nevertheless, after a good deal of discussion, Sir Arthur prevailed upon the Portuguese general to place at his disposal 1400 infantry and 250 cavalry, and at the same time to promise that, up to the 22nd, he would, with the rest of his troops, cover the rear of the English. Wellesley, on his side, undertook to feed, for as long a time as he should require them, the 1650 placed under his orders.

Meanwhile, Laborde, threatened by the English army, was obliged to halt, on the 16th, at Rorissa. This was necessary for two reasons, — first, he would have lost his communications with Loison, had he retreated upon Torres Vedras; and next, Lisbon would have been uncovered, had he proceeded to Alcantara, to meet his supplies. Besides, the position was a strong one, and he had a right to expect that he would be joined during the battle by five or six thousand men, whom his colleague was pushing on from Rio Major.

Wellesley quitted his bivouac on the 17th, at day-

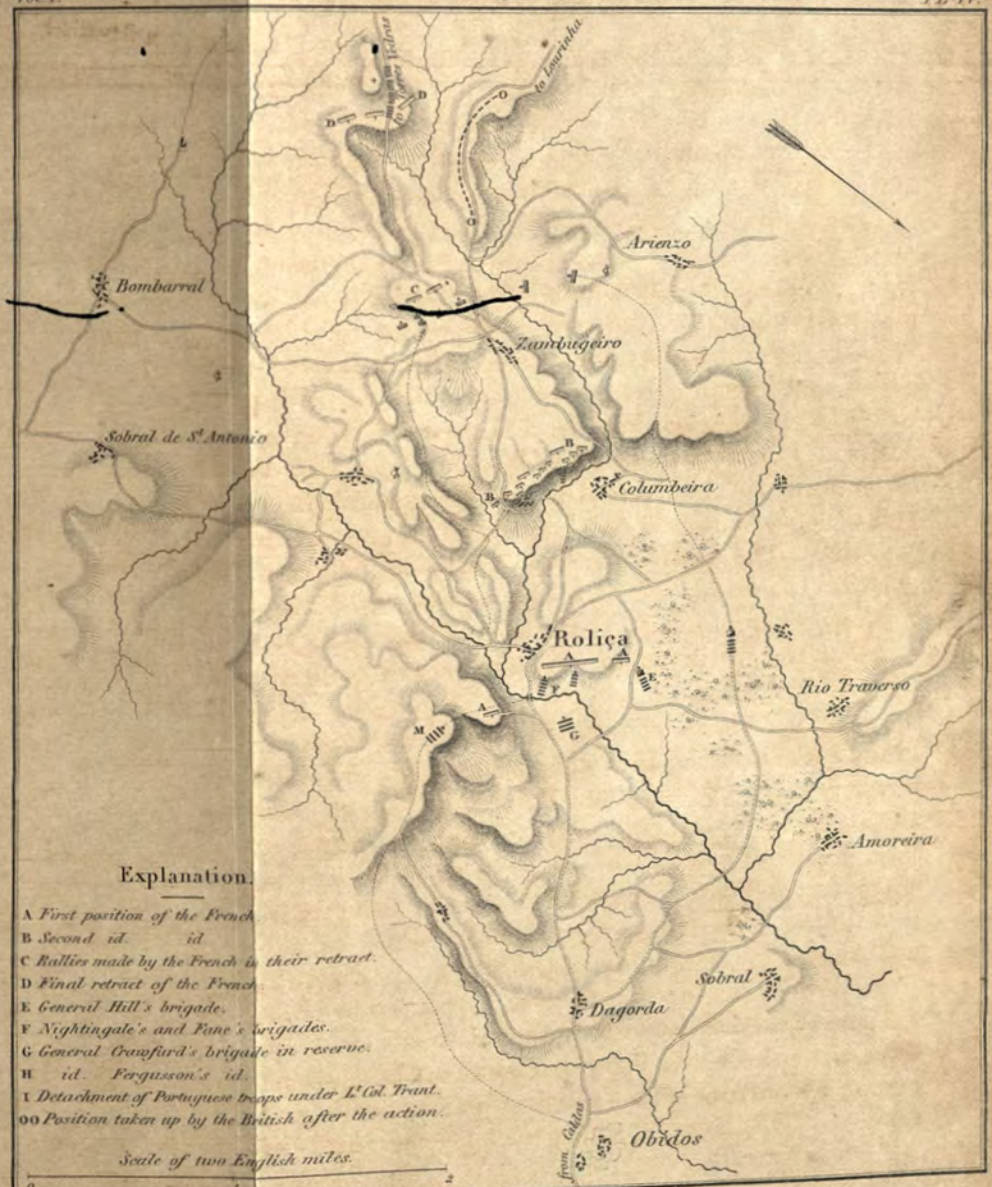
break, with 13,480 bayonets, 470 horse, and eighteen pieces of cannon. His troops advanced in three columns of attack. The right, composed of 1200 Portuguese infantry and fifty horse, was directed to make a long détour round the mountains, to turn the enemy's left and fall vigorously upon his rear. The left column, consisting of the brigades of Bowes and Fergusson, of three companies of riflemen, a battery of light artillery, and forty horse, received orders to cross the hills of Obidos, in order to carry the posts on that side of the valley, and turn the enemy's right, which rested upon Rorissa. It was, besides, directed to watch the movements of Loison, whose arrival at Rio Major had been ascertained, and to give battle to that general, in case of his appearance, before he could communicate with Laborde. The centre, which consisted of the brigades of Hill, Crawford, Nightingale, and Fane, with 400 Portuguese light infantry, the rest of the cavalry, and two batteries of six and nine pounders, was destined for the principal attack.

The troops in the centre had scarcely begun to drive in the French skirmishers when Fergusson's brigade was seen ascending the hills, and striving to gain the line of the enemy's retreat. But General Laborde was not so imprudent as to suffer himself to be cut off. The posts which covered his position on the plain being carried, he withdrew, disputing every foot of ground, to a new and stronger position, upon the height of Colombara. Instead of dislodging him from that position by turning his left, Wellesley committed the fault of attacking in front, at a point where the enemy could not be approached except by narrow paths, skirting and traversing deep ravines. This circumstance prolonged the battle to no

ACTION NEAR ROLIÇA,

17th August 1808.

Vol I. PL IV.



purpose, and rendered it very murderous. For, assailed as he was by five columns at once, Laborde behaved with great gallantry, and did not order a retreat upon Montechico till his right had been completely turned. Though wounded at the commencement of the affair, he never quitted the field. The action lasted from nine in the morning till five in the afternoon, and the French general changed his position not fewer than seven times. His loss amounted to three guns, with 600 men killed and wounded, and would have been much more considerable had Wellesley's cavalry been strong enough to charge the columns while retiring. The English estimated their own loss at 500 men. They had brought into action only a part of their force, a circumstance which testified in a creditable manner to the bravery of their troops. "The victory of Rorissa," says Count Toreno, "gave to the English a degree of self-confidence, such as had not accompanied them in any of their former and disastrous expeditions." It was there also that a beginning was made to Wellesley's renown, which more important triumphs were destined in after years continually to augment.

Colonel Napier is of opinion that, after this victory, the English general ought to have marched straight against Loison, and that, beating and driving him back upon the Tagus, he would have accomplished the purpose of the expedition without risking another battle. He forgets, however, that Laborde and Loison had formed a junction during the night succeeding the action, and were marching together in the direction of Montechico. Still, if Wellesley had advanced to Torres Vedras at an early hour in the morning of the 18th, he might have prevented the coming up of the remainder of the French troops, and

obtained at the same time the result which was only to be secured by success in the battle of Vimiera. It would appear, moreover, that he actually entertained the idea of executing this movement, and that the necessary orders were issued, when he received intelligence of the arrival of General Anstruther's division in the Tagus. Concluding from what had passed at Rorissa that it would not be wise to dispense with the support of these troops, he marched on the 18th towards Lourinha, that he might be at hand to cover their disembarkation. The result was, that on the morrow the whole of his forces were concentrated at Vimiera. They amounted, exclusive of the 1400 Portuguese infantry and 400 Portuguese cavalry, to 16,000 bayonets, 240 horse, and 18 pieces of cannon. It happened that, the very same day, Junot, with the bulk of his army, took up a position at Torres Vedras, his force consisting of about 12,700 infantry, 1300 cavalry, and 26 guns. It was Wellesley's purpose to attack him there, and to drive him from it; and following so as to prevent a rally, to march straight upon Lisbon; while Moore, disembarking in the Mondego, should move upon Santarem, so as at once to protect the left of the English army, block the line of the Tagus, and threaten the communications of the French with Elvas.

This double line of operations presented under the circumstances fewer difficulties than a single line; and did not afford to Junot, in spite of his central position, any of the advantages which are the ordinary results of the adoption of such lines. As the first step in the execution of his plan, Sir Arthur proposed by a rapid march to turn Junot's strong position (which, by following the road that passes between the sea-coast and

Torres Vedras, he could do) and to gain Mafra with a strong advanced guard; while the bulk of the army, seizing the most commanding of the heights in the vicinity of that town, should intercept the communications of the French with Montechico. Such were the strategic advantages to be secured by this operation; besides which Wellesley saw that the mountain roads would of themselves be the best for his army, which, to all practical purposes, was destitute of cavalry.

The preliminary arrangements were already complete, when Sir Harry Burrard arrived in Maceira roads, and gave orders from on board of ship that no movement should be made till the arrival of Sir John Moore's corps, which he had directed to come round to the same anchorage. It was in vain that Sir Arthur pointed out to him that such a reinforcement was unnecessary; that all the chances were in favour of the English army, and that it was better to attack immediately than be attacked on the morrow. Burrard refused to modify his order, considering that a flank march between the sea and a chain of mountains, along a road intersected by ravines and torrents, was an operation too hazardous to be undertaken. He found himself encouraged in this resistance by the opinions of the principal officers of the English army: Wellesley alone adhered to his original idea, believing the operation to be practicable, and he long afterwards continued to regret that he had not been permitted to undertake the responsibility. "He returned to camp," says the Marquis of Londonderry, "satisfied that the incapacity of his new commander, after paralysing the success at Rorissa, would bring disgrace upon the expedition, and serious reverses."

On the 21st Junot quitted his ground at Torres

Vedras, and, according to Wellesley's anticipations, made ready to attack the plateau of Vimiera. Though too extensive, the plateau in question afforded a position good in itself, but which, in the event of a reverse, would have proved disastrous for the English army. That army had, in fact, no retreat except upon a rugged coast, washed by a stormy sea. "And yet," says General Foy, "Wellesley did not experience the slightest approach to uneasiness." It is necessary to remark, however, that Sir Arthur had not established himself at Vimiera with any purpose of receiving a battle in that position.

Junot had a very simple plan to follow. It was, to mass the whole of his forces and to fall upon the left of the English. If victorious, the sea would have swallowed up all those who escaped his arms; if repulsed, his retreat would be attended with no difficulty. But instead of directing this movement to be made, which circumstances, and, still more, the numerical inferiority of his troops, rendered necessary, the Duke of Abrantes formed two separate attacks; and committed, besides, the mistake of bringing them into action one after another. The English were thus enabled, by weakening their left and right alternately, to make them support each other.

When the brigades of Brenier and Solignac, delayed by the difficult nature of the country and the detours which they were obliged to make, began to open fire upon the English, the attack of the brigades of Charlot and Thomiers had, so to speak, terminated. Nevertheless the French troops behaved gallantly, and, being superior in cavalry, compelled the English battalions more than once to give ground; but the defective

BATTLE OF VIMIERO,

21st August 1808.

Vol. I. PL. V.

Explanation.
A Gen. H[illegible]'s brigade (3 batt.s)
B . Crawfurd's brigade (2 batt.s)
C . Ackland's . (2 B.s and a det.t)
D . Nightingale's . (2 batt.s)
E . Bowes' . (2 batt.s)
F . Fergusson's . (3 batt.s)
G Detach.t of Portuguese under Trant.
H Second position of Ackland.
I British park of Artillery.
K Detach.t of light dragoons.
L Gen. Fane's brigade (4 batt.s)
M . [illegible]'s brigade (3 batt.s)
N [illegible] of French grenadiers.
p Gen. Thomiere's brigade.
t . Margeron's cavalry
v Foy and Prost's artillery.
n Gen. Brennier's brigade.
o Gen. Solignac's brigade.
Q . Nightingale's .
R . Fergusson's .
S . Bowes' .
T . Ackland's .
UV Crawfurd's brigade and Trant's detach.t
w Retreat of the right wing of the French.
x Position taken up by a body of the French troops to cover the retreat towards Torres-Vedras.
Porto Novo
Sobreiro
Descomboados
Vimiero
Retreat to Torres-Vedras
Toledo
From Torres-Vedras
Perogance
Cabeza Corda
Scale of two English miles
0
1
2

nature of Junot's plan, and the able dispositions of Wellesley, hindered them from achieving a victory. After a struggle of three hours' duration, they fell back upon a position in the neighbourhood, the front of which was exactly parallel to that of the English. Brenier was wounded and taken; Solignac, Charlot, and Foy, two colonels, and a great number of superior officers, received wounds more or less severe. The beaten army left 1800 men, 13 guns, 23 ammunition waggons, and upwards of 20,000 cartridges, upon the field of battle. The loss on the side of the English did not exceed 720 men, of whom 135 were killed, 534 wounded.

Napoleon, on learning the defeat of Junot, pronounced the following opinion: "If the Duke of Abrantes had marched with 12,000 men, which, in case of need, he could have assembled, instead of 9200,— if he had left in the defile of Torres Vedras one strong battalion of infantry and 600 horse,— and if he had advanced rapidly, with the rest of his army, to attack the enemy in flank or in rear, at the same time that the detachment from the defile made a demonstration against the front of the English line;—if all these dispositions had been made during the night, and a vigorous attack been begun at daylight, victory would have certainly crowned once more the efforts of the French arms, and the English might have been driven into the sea." There is a good deal of truth in this criticism; but it depends upon an assumption which we cannot admit, in spite of Thiebault's assertion of its correctness, viz. that there were only 9200 French present in the action. Official documents positively contradict this calculation.

While the battle was in progress, Burrard appeared upon the field, but, as an act of courtesy, left his young

colleague to finish, alone, the action which he had so happily begun. He did not deviate from this reserve, except by directing, most inopportunely, Fergusson's column to halt, at a moment when, having completely separated the brigades of Brenier and Solignac, it was about to compel the greater part of the latter to lay down its arms. He hindered Wellesley, at the same time, from executing an able movement to complete his victory, which consisted in driving back Junot with five brigades beyond the Sierra Baragueda, and forcing him upon the Tagus; while three other brigades, carrying the defiles of Torres Vedras, should push as far as Montechico, and cut him off from the road to Lisbon. "It was one of those prompt and bold conceptions," says Colonel Napier, "which distinguish great commanders." For this very reason it alarmed Burrard, who alleged, in justification of his refusal, the arrival of fresh troops (discovered by Spencer upon the heights in Junot's rear), the defective state of his *matériel*, the fatigue of his draught animals, want of order in his commissariat, the insufficiency of his means of transport, the unsatisfactory condition of his cavalry, and the absence of all effectual support from the Portuguese troops and people. There was, unquestionably, some weight in these arguments, at a time when Moore's succours might be momentarily expected, more especially as the enemy conducted his retreat with a skill and coolness which indicated clearly enough his determination to continue the battle. At all events they convinced the Adjutant-General Clinton, and the Quarter-Master-General Murray. It was in vain, therefore, that Wellesley energetically pointed out, on the field itself, the necessity of immediately following up the beaten enemy

and pushing them back towards the north; he was obliged to yield to the general opinion. But the check provoked him so much, that he could not refrain from saying to his staff, "Gentlemen, there is nothing for us to do now, but to hunt red-legged partridges." Moreover, he maintained to the last that he had advised the only course which was capable of bringing about a decisive result. Writing to the Duke of York, on the 22nd, he says, "I think that if Hill's brigade and the advanced guard had marched upon Torres Vedras, as soon as it became certain that the enemy's right had been defeated by our left, and if this latter had followed up its advantages, the enemy would have been cut off from Torres Vedras, and we should have arrived at Lisbon before him. I even doubt whether a French army could have remained in Portugal at all." Sir Arthur expressed the same opinion on several subsequent occasions, and particularly in his evidence before the Court of Inquiry. We quote this fact in order to meet an assertion often advanced by French authors, that Wellington was wanting in hardihood and resolution. In the present case, he appears, on the contrary, more open to the reproach of having counselled an operation bold even to rashness. But be this as it may, we are satisfied, looking to the nature of the country and the respective positions of the belligerents, that the capture of Torres Vedras and of Mafra would have forced Junot to abandon his artillery and many thousand waggons in order to reach Almeida and Elvas. And we are further convinced that this movement would have been rendered impossible if Moore, acting upon the plan conceived by Wellesley, had landed at Mondego and taken possession of Santarem.

The exaggerated prudence of Burrard having enabled the Duke of Abrantes to regain the defile of Torres Vedras, the relative positions of the two armies at nightfall became the same as they had been on the previous evening. Next day, the 22nd, Sir Hugh Dalrymple disembarked at an early hour, and assumed the chief command. Thus, in the course of twenty-four hours, the army had passed in succession under the orders of three generals, coming from different places, with different views, habits, and degrees of information, and not having had so much as the opportunity to arrange by letter for the adoption of a uniform plan of operations. The army was dissatisfied at seeing its real chief reduced to the fourth rank, and sacrificed to men whose incapacity was made manifest by the unlucky orders which they issued after Rorissa and Vimiera. Even the general officers considered themselves bound to protest indirectly against this manner of acting, by writing to their young colleague a joint letter of congratulation on the manner in which he had exercised the command.

It was the intention of Dalrymple to wait the arrival of Sir John Moore's corps, when, on the 22nd, Junot, alarmed by symptoms of an immediate revolt at Lisbon, sent General Kellermann to propose an armistice, and a plan for the evacuation of Portugal. This proposal, somewhat unexpected from a general who had exhibited so much audacity at the commencement of the campaign, was embraced with eagerness by the new chief of the English army.

Wellesley and Burrard were present at the conference, but only in the capacity of assessors. The real negotiator was Dalrymple, who accepted many articles in spite of the opposition of his colleagues, while at the same time he declined to affix his signature to the con-

vention, because it was not the custom for a general-in-chief to treat directly with an officer of inferior rank. It was Wellesley, therefore, whose name stands at the head of the note revised by Kellermann, who signed the deed; and who, on acceding so far to the wish of his chief, was convinced that he undertook no responsibility, because he disapproved of the principle of the armistice, and even desired that it should be limited to forty-eight hours. With respect to the definitive convention of the 30th of August, called improperly the Convention of Cintra, it was not only negotiated through the medium of Colonel Murray, but Sir Arthur was unacquainted with the tenor of it, even when called upon to justify his conduct before the Court of Inquiry.

The Convention of Cintra was greatly disapproved by General Freire as well as by the stirring faction of which the Bishop of Oporto was at the head. They reproached the English generals with having made no mention in their treaty either of the Portuguese army, or of the junta of Oporto, or of the prince regent, or of any authority, civil or military, representing the allied nation;—a strange act of forgetfulness certainly, which Dalrymple explained by asserting that the convention was a purely military arrangement. The bishop blamed them also for having recognised the right of conquest appealed to by the French, and for permitting these latter, by article five, to carry off the produce of their plunder, and to protect, by article six, traitors and supporters of the usurper from molestation. The entire bent of these concessions appeared to him to indicate a settled purpose of sheltering the invaders from the chastisement which their rapine and cruelty deserved. But the principal ground of dissatisfaction

with Freire and his adherents lay in this, that the English army had been directed to assist the prince regent in the recovery of his legitimate rights,—a purpose quite opposed to the views of the Bishop of Oporto, who desired to become the head of an insurrectionary government. Fortunately the people, though deceived for a moment, were not slow in recognising the services which England had rendered, in delivering them from the French army. Meanwhile, the differences between the Portuguese and the English generals became so serious, that the latter found themselves obliged to decline recognising the authority of the juntas at all, and to re-establish, on the 18th of September, according to instructions received from their own government, the regency appointed by Prince Don John, on his departure for the Brazils. Portugal recognised this new government, and all the juntas were dissolved.

It was in England, however, more than anywhere else, that dissatisfaction became extreme. It manifested itself in such tokens of indignation and grief as had never before been exhibited. Journalists enclosed their sheets in black margins, as a sign of public mourning; and caricatures were numerous, in which three gibbets were erected for the three generals who had succeeded to the chief command. A species of "universal madness," says Colonel Napier, "seemed to have fallen upon all classes of society, and, like the Athenians after the battle of Argos, the English people, had their laws permitted, would have condemned their generals to death for having gained a victory." Yet, in the opinion of M. Thiers, the expedition to Portugal was one of the best conducted and most fortunate that England had up to that hour undertaken upon the Continent.

In vain the Park and Tower guns announced the victory of Vimiera, as they had done many other victories achieved by British arms. In vain the most popular statesmen endeavoured to resist the current of opinion. The mass of the people, as well as the journalists, persisted in representing the Convention of Cintra as even more disastrous than those of the Helder and of Closter Severn; indeed, so fierce was the outcry, that in order to appease it the government judged it expedient to submit the treaty to solemn investigation, as if it had been fatal to the best interests of the country and derogatory to the honour of the English arms. Sir Arthur, who had signed the preliminary convention, became in a marked degree the object of party rage. He was accused of having permitted to escape him a prey more easy to be secured than that of Baylen; indeed, there were those who did not hesitate to add, that, under like circumstances, Spanish volunteers would have done far better service to the common cause than he and his regular army. It does not appear that, after his return to England, Wellesley found any difficulty in refuting these charges. He was able to show, upon the clearest evidence, that Junot escaped destruction through no fault of his; and having established that fact, he not only abstained from screening himself by referring all to Dalrymple's orders, but generously undertook to defend the convention itself. He pronounced it to be, on the whole, both politic and advantageous, though in some of its details it lay open to objection; and the reasons which he assigned for so judging cannot be lightly got rid of. Junot, he contended, was master of many strong positions covering Lisbon. His retreat upon Elvas was safe, and he could from

that point prolong the struggle, and render new sacrifices necessary. Now the English army was not in a state to support these sacrifices except with difficulty. Its field equipment was shattered to pieces; its horses were out of condition and few in number; there were not carriages enough to transport its stores; and, besides that the cavalry was dismounted, provisions for ten or twelve days' consumption were all on which it could reckon. A brief continuance of stormy weather might drive away the fleet, the sole resource of that army, from the coast, and render the disembarkation of Sir John Moore impossible. Finally, the siege train was still on board ship, and the only means of conveying it to its place of destination was to drag the guns by strength of hand across the mountains. To reject Junot's proposals would, therefore, have been to renew the struggle and incur fresh risks, while to accept them was to deliver Portugal without loss of time and without sacrifices. Now this was an important consideration at a moment when it was thought judicious to carry the war with as little delay as possible into Spain. Besides, by agreeing to the convention, the difficulty of reducing the fortresses was avoided, as well as the danger of having the communication with the fleet interrupted. Finally, Lisbon would be saved from certain destruction, and the treasures accumulated in that city secured. Hence all that could be hoped for as the result of a well managed and successful campaign would be attained without loss, and without danger.

The Court of Inquiry, consisting of officers, honourable no doubt, but enfeebled by age, admitted the greater part of these reasons to be sound; and on the 22nd of December, after six weeks of investigation,

declared that, looking to the arrival in succession of two new commanders after the battle of Vimiera, it was little to be wondered at that the victory had not been more vigorously followed up; and that there was no necessity to pursue the inquiry further. This judgment gave perfect satisfaction to Wellesley, who had proposed to march upon Torres Vedras after the battle; yet it is by no means impossible that, like Dalrymple and Burrard, he would have found his career cut short by it, had he not been carried through by the influence of his family and the prestige of his former victories. It was by just such a declaration of public opinion that Sir Robert Calder, Lord Melville, Warren Hastings, the Duke of York, the Marquis of Wellesley, and many other distinguished persons, fell into disgrace after having rendered signal services to their country. For there are moments when the multitude lose the faculty of reasoning; they can neither see nor feel what is right. Fortunately, such intervals of public madness occur but rarely and seldom last long. In the case now before us no great while elapsed ere reason and common sense regained the ascendency. By little and little truth broke through the mists of error, and then came about the unanimous conviction that the campaign in Portugal had been, on the whole, disastrous to France and very favourable to Great Britain. For the first time, indeed, the English army, so unfortunate in former expeditions, had tried its strength with the imperial troops and obtained the advantage. It had established the highest character for courage and steadiness. Its leader, whom men used to call, in derision, an Indian General, had shown himself worthy to do battle with the veterans of Napoleon. In a word,

Junot, who expected at one time to obtain the crown of Etruria, was pushed across the frontier; and Portugal, in less than three months, stood free from the presence of all its enemies.

Though certain French authorities speak of the Convention of Cintra as of a concession cleverly won from the victor, the arrangement seems to us to have been less creditable to the Duke of Abrantes than to Wellesley. For, is it true that the situation of Junot had become so desperate that the immediate abandonment of Portugal and the embarkation of his troops deserved to be regarded as advantages? We cannot admit it. No doubt it would have been a perilous undertaking, with 12,000 men, to continue the war in a country given up to insurrection, at a distance of 200 leagues from the nearest French corps, against a vindictive people, supported by an imposing fleet, and by an army of 14,000 English, which the speedy arrival of Moore would increase to 33,000 combatants. Yet if we consider that the forts and the Russian fleet were well able to guard the entrance of the Tagus,—that a threat of bombardment could restrain the insurrection of Lisbon,—that Junot had the means of passing the river, of occupying Abrantes, and provisioning Elvas with stores taken at Evora,—that his retreat by Almeida, Elvas, and La Lippe was secure from the moment that Burrard prevented Wellesley from following up the troops beaten at Vimiera,—when we take into account that time would be required for the English to reduce the forts on the Tagus, to organise their resources in Lisbon, to prepare a siege *matériel*, to capture Almeida and Elvas (during the most unhealthy season of the year, and in a country beset with pestilential miasmata), and to

strike a last blow at the French army upon the Spanish frontier,— when, above all, we recollect that Napoleon would have had time to reinforce Junot with part of the grand army, now become disposable in Germany, —the conviction is forced upon us, that the Duke of Abrantes was no longer the bold leader, who, with a handful of soldiers, worn out by fatigue, had taken possession of Lisbon in defiance of an English squadron, of 14,000 Portuguese troops, and of a population of 30,000 inhabitants all hostile to France. So dissatisfied, indeed, was Napoleon with the conduct of his lieutenant, that he would have handed him over to a council of war, had not the English, by their unjust diatribes, glorified in some sort the Duke of Abrantes at the expense of their own generals.

In consequence of the events which led to the Convention of Cintra, the minister believed himself bound to deprive of their commands the officers who had taken part in that negotiation;—a lamentable concession to the opposition, which he ought openly to have combated. Wellesley, whose talents had been neutralised by the action of chiefs of moderate capacity, and who, besides, was satisfied that the war of the Peninsula had been undertaken upon a false principle, abandoned his post without the slightest regret, and resumed his labours as Secretary for Ireland and member of Parliament. In the latter capacity, he succeeded in giving a more practical turn to men's ideas, and in preparing against the storm with which it appeared to him that Spain would soon be threatened. Meanwhile public opinion gradually calmed down, and the tide of popularity returned to him who had never ceased to be worthy of it, who throughout his entire career acted

so as to deserve, though he never performed a single act for the mere purpose of obtaining it.

In January, 1809, the House of Commons did justice to the talents of the young general, and thanked him for the distinguished courage and ability which he had displayed in Portugal on the 17th and 21st of August, in 1808. "You achieved at Vimiera," said the Speaker, "a victory over the enemy's forces, honourable to yourself and glorious for the British arms." A few days afterwards the House of Lords conferred on Wellesley, and the officers and soldiers under his command, the same marks of its esteem and gratitude. This was satisfaction enough for Sir Arthur, while awaiting the day when, at the demand of the British people, he should be reinstated in his command, and selected to restore in Spain the honour of the British flag.

After the evacuation of Portugal, Mr. Stuart, the representative of Great Britain, made many and pressing attempts to bring about the formation of a central junta. Hitherto each particular junta had striven to assert the supremacy of the province which it represented. That of Seville, without any authority whatever, had arrogated to itself the title of Supreme Junta; but its authority was by no means coincident with the title. Indeed, the greater number of these assemblies seemed desirous of establishing a federative government, a small minority alone appearing to lean towards the monarchy. The most serious differences might have arisen out of this state of things, had not the central junta, by great good fortune, given time for passion to settle down, while it was preparing laws, by virtue of which a convocation of the Cortes would become necessary.

The old laws which regulated the Spanish Parliament were defective in this respect, that, if they had been applied without modification, Galicia would have been represented by one member only, while Asturias would not have been represented at all. Now it was essential to the nature of a central junta that it should invest some individual with the chief command of the Spanish armies. Yet such was the apathy or ignorance of the new government, that nothing could prevail upon it to adopt this wise and necessary resolution. Each captain-general, each local junta, continued to assert their own particular rights. With respect to the assembly at Aranjuez, as it was destitute alike of principles and general views, it "adopted," to use an expression of Mr. Stuart, "a system of government which could neither inspire men with courage nor increase their enthusiasm." Too numerous for an executive, too limited in its composition to exercise legislative authority, it busied itself about trifles, and compromised its influence by retrograde measures at a moment when the safety of the national cause demanded prompt and vigorous resolutions. The army made no progress, and the supplies furnished by England were as completely wasted as they had been in the beginning of the revolution. The same want of care, the same blamable extravagance continued.*

* Since the commencement of hostilities, Great Britain had sent for the use of the Spanish army above 2,000,000*l.* in money, 150 field-pieces, 42,000 rounds of ammunition, 200,000 muskets, 61,000 swords, 79,000 pikes, 23,000,000 ball cartridges, 6,000,000 bullets, 15,000 barrels of powder, 92,000 suits of clothing, 310,000 pairs of shoes, 37,000 pairs of boots, 250,000 yards of cloth, 10,000 sets of camp equipments, 118,000 yards of linen, 50,000 great coats,

To crown the evil, the conduct of the English Government towards the Peninsula "was scarcely better than that of the Central Junta itself."* The ministers entertained the most mistaken ideas concerning the strength and relative courage of the French and Spanish armies. They were unable to arrive at any fitting determination, or to adopt any useful measure. It was owing to their indolence and incapacity that the Anglo-Portuguese army arrived at Salamanca too late to act in concert with the Spanish troops. Indeed, it was only on the 6th of October that Sir John Moore received a despatch informing him, for the first time, that a plan of warfare was arranged. He lost through this carelessness the inestimable advantage of being the first in the field, and suffered the additional wrong that he was furnished with a body of troops insufficient, in point of numbers, to accomplish the desired object. Besides an effective force of 30,000 men, he had 20,000 Portuguese, destitute of experience, and very defective both in equipment and organisation. The staff and administration of his army were composed of young officers who knew nothing at all about their duty; the roads were bad; and the rainy season, so fatal to troops on the move, was approaching. In a word, it was necessary, in order to meet the enemy, to make a march of 600 miles through a poor and desolate country, where there was no eagerness to supply the English army, and in which provisions and the necessary means of transport were furnished to it only on being paid for. "Besides, such was the policy of

50,000 canteens, 54,000 haversacks, with a multitude of articles besides, — such as medicine, surgical instruments, &c., innumerable.

* Napier.

ministers, that while they lavished the resources of the treasury upon the Spaniards, they left the English army to choose between total destitution and obtaining what they could upon credit." *

The instructions given to Moore directed him to open a communication with the Spanish authorities, with a view to prepare a plan of campaign; but none of these authorities had either the right or the power to come to any determination. Sir John, on the other side, lacked the data necessary for arranging a suitable plan for himself. It must be confessed that a general has seldom found himself in a more distressing situation. Yet Moore applied great energy to overcome his difficulties; for, on the 21st, his army was already sufficiently equipped, organised, and provisioned to commence its movement of concentration upon Salamanca.

Before giving an account of this movement, however, it is necessary that we should take a rapid survey of the state of the Peninsula, and describe briefly the principal events in the campaign of Somo-Sierra, which resulted in the capture of Madrid.

* On the 24th of Nov. 1808, Moore wrote to Lord Castlereagh:—"I am without a shilling; and in constant apprehension that want of money will prevent me from obtaining the provisions which we require. It is impossible to describe the embarrassment which the absence of this most essential article occasions."

CHAP. VII.

ARRIVAL OF NAPOLEON IN SPAIN. — SUCCESSIVE DEFEATS OF THE NATIONAL ARMIES. — CAPTURE OF MADRID. — SIR JOHN MOORE MOVES UPON SALAMANCA. — HIS IDEAS OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPANISH GENERALS. — HIS EMBARRASSMENTS AND DIFFICULTIES. — AFTER SOME HESITATION HE DETERMINES TO THREATEN THE COMMUNICATIONS OF THE FRENCH ARMY. — SALUTARY EFFECT OF THAT DIVERSION. — NAPOLEON PURSUES THE ENGLISH ARMY. — MOORE SUCCEEDS IN ESCAPING HIM. — HIS RETREAT UPON CORUNNA. — GLORIOUS BATTLE UNDER THE WALLS OF THAT CITY. — THE ENGLISH ARMY RE-EMBARKS. — REFLECTIONS UPON THIS DISASTROUS CAMPAIGN. — EMBARRASSMENT OF SIR JOHN CRADOCK. — NOMINATION OF SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY TO THE COMMAND.

It has been seen that Napoleon entirely mistook the character of the Spanish people, and that to the hope of a steady restoration of peace, there had succeeded the certainty of a terrible war. The Emperor, however, was not the man to recoil from an attempt to which he had deliberately committed himself, and which had for its object to sustain his maritime war against England, and to deprive the Bourbons of their last resting place in Europe. He resolved therefore to turn to account the brief space which Austria, as yet incomplete in her armament, seemed disposed to grant him; and to crush, by a bold stroke, the Anglo-national troops, whose recent successes had led to the evacuation of Portugal, and of nine-tenths of the Spanish territory. By a curious coincidence he selected, as the moment at which to strike this blow, the time when an *attempt* was made

Paul Delaroche pinx. Héliographie. A. Riffaut sculp.

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in Spain to set up some authority superior to that of the juntas, a scheme not unwise in itself, and favoured by England, but destined to result in complete failure.

The French army encamped behind the Ebro was reinforced by a body of veteran troops, which were withdrawn from Germany, and of which the strength did not fall short of 150,000 men. Napoleon himself, after confirming his alliance with Russia, and obtaining from Alexander the recognition of Joseph, proceeded, upon the 8th of December, 1808, to assume the command of that army at Vittoria. But before quitting Paris, he opened the session of the legislative assembly, and, in a boastful speech, thus announced his designs upon Spain:—"It is through the special interference of Providence, which has always favoured our arms, that passion has so blinded the counsels of the English, that they have abandoned the protection of the sea, and at last displayed their troops upon the continent. I go in a few days to place myself at the head of my army, and, with the help of God, to crown the king of Spain at Madrid, and to plant my eagles on the towers of Lisbon." The senate, always servile as long as the power of its master remained unshaken, replied to this communication by pronouncing that the war which he was about to undertake was *politic, just, and necessary*.*

Napoleon made all his preparations with admirable skill and activity. Though the state of dispersion in

* There is no longer any doubt that Napoleon was encouraged by Russia in his designs upon Spain. His correspondence with Joseph fully establishes that fact. Indeed, it was in consequence of such encouragement, that Napoleon agreed to the annexation, at a general peace, of Finland, Moldavia, and Wallachia, to the Russian empire.

which the Spanish corps lay might have justified him in risking a direct march upon Madrid, he was too sagacious to neglect a single precaution which the rules of art suggested. In this respect, his policy offered a striking contrast to that of his opponents. They in their weakness despised the ordinary laws of war; indeed, ever since the affair of Baylen, the Spanish generals aimed at nothing else than how they might succeed in surrounding the French armies. The proceeding was not only ridiculous in itself, but it led to constant disasters; it brought on defeats and paralysed all the efforts of the Central Junta.

The disposition of the Spanish corps, at the commencement of hostilies, was faulty in the extreme. On the left, the army of Galicia and the Asturias, commanded by Blake, about 45,000 strong, and composed in a great measure of troops of the line, had passed Bilbao, and was directing its march upon Mondragon, with a view to debouch in rear of Vittoria. In the centre the army of Estremadura, which numbered rather more than 12,000 men, occupied Burgos, under the command of Galluzo and the Marquis de Belvidere; while on the right the army of Andalusia, under Castaños, skirted the Ebro from Logrono to Calahorra. Meanwhile the army of Arragon, about 18,000 strong, commanded by Palafox, occupied the left bank of the Arragon; and, finally, a corps of reserve, about 10,000, which never appeared in line at all, was directed to establish itself in front of Madrid. These scattered bodies, of which the total strength amounted to 105,000 men (not including the Miquelets, who, apart from the strategic line, disputed Catalonia with General Duhesme), were about to be supported by 30,000 English, under

the orders of Baird and Sir John Moore, which coming, one portion from Corunna, the other from the banks of the Tagus, were to form a junction near Valladolid. General Moore, as early as the month of October, had pointed out to the government the defects in the system of operations adopted by the Spaniards. "So long as the French remain on the defensive," says he, "the faults in their plan will not appear; but the moment these assume the offensive some great catastrophe will follow."

It was not long before this prediction received its accomplishment. Napoleon made arrangements to break through the centre of the enemy's line, to throw himself next upon their two wings, and to crush them before attacking Madrid. In order to carry this plan into execution, he directed Soult to advance, on the 10th of November, and to establish himself at Burgos; a central point, whence he could at once threaten the capital, hold the English army in check, and envelope and destroy the left wing of the Spaniards; which the right, menaced by the same movement, would be unable to support. The Duke of Dalmatia encountered, upon the banks of the Arlanzon, at a little distance from the city, the army of Estremadura, commanded by the young and presumptuous Marquis of Belvidere. A vigorous attack, by General Mouton, dispersed that army with a promptitude quite unexpected, and it was cut to pieces by Lasalle and Milhaud. The city and castle of Burgos fell the same day into the hands of the victors, and Soult at once moved on towards Reinosa, with a view to cut off the retreat of Blake, who was retiring before the corps of Lefevre and Bellune.

On the 11th, Victor, renewing an attack which had been commenced the evening before, dispersed completely the troops of Blake at Espinosa. There remained, after this, no other armies to engage than those of Castaños and Palafox, both of them established on the left of the French. Napoleon directed the brave Lannes to overwhelm these corps, and to push them back upon Marshal Ney, who had received instructions to advance upon their rear. The Duc de Montebello arrived on the 23rd at Tudela, at a moment when the two Spanish generals were still disputing about the plan of campaign which it would be desirable to follow. He attacked and defeated them before they had time to concentrate their forces. It was a complete rout, for here, as at Burgos and Espinosa, a panic fell upon the Spaniards as soon as their first line was broken; though they had never, on any previous occasion, exhibited a greater amount of individual courage.

If Marshal Ney had executed his movement with the promptitude and vigour which Lannes displayed, the Spanish army would have been obliged to lay down its arms. But alarmed by some exaggerated reports of the strength of Castaños, which met him on the march, Ney halted for a while at Soria, in spite of the advice of his chief of the staff, who was anxious to push on to Catalayud. He lost by that blunder the opportunity of cutting off the enemy's retreat.

As soon as he was made acquainted with the dispersion of the Andalusian and Arragonese troops, Napoleon, no longer anxious about his flanks, pushed on briskly from Burgos to Bocequillas, at the foot of the Guadarama. On the 29th, he reconnoitred the gorge of the Somo-Sierra in which was posted the wreck of

the army of Estremadura, reinforced by the Andalusian garrison of Madrid; and, on the following morning, a brilliant charge of Polish lancers of the chasseurs of the guard, commanded by Montebrun, made him master of the pass. The Emperor swept aside the crowd of fugitives which covered the plain of Castile. On the 2nd of December, the anniversary of his coronation and of the battle of Austerlitz, the main body of the French army presented itself before the gates of Madrid.

The Spanish capital had been fortified in haste, and General Morla held it with 8000 troops of the line and 30,000 or 40,000 armed peasants. After a fruitless summons twice repeated, the Emperor caused some shells to be thrown, and battered in breach the Retiro, a royal residence, surrounded by walls and planted upon a height adjoining the city. At an early hour on the 3rd, Villatte's division penetrated through that opening, traversed the promenade of the Prado, made itself master of the barricades at the entrance of the streets, and took possession of the immense palace of the Duc de Medina Cœli, one of the keys of Madrid. At that moment confusion was at its height in the city, for the inhabitants were without the means of subsistence, and the mob, breaking loose from all restraint, were plundering everywhere.

The Marquis of Castelar profited by this confusion to withdraw during the night at the head of the troops of the line. Seeing themselves thus abandoned, the people thought only of making their submission to Napoleon. The inhabitants laid down their arms, and the peasants quitted the place. At six o'clock on the morning of the 4th, General Morla and Don Fernando de la Vera came to announce to the Emperor that he

might take possession of the capital. Dazzled by this brilliant and rapid success, Napoleon believed that with a single blow he had finished the war, and settled the crown of Charles V. upon the head of Joseph. His answer to the corregidor of Madrid proves this. "The Bourbons," says he, "can reign no more in Spain. As for the English armies, I shall drive them from the Peninsula; Saragossa, Valencia, and Seville, have submitted either upon conviction or to the force of my arms. Nor is there any obstacle strong enough to retard the execution of my will."

It was not without reason that the Emperor so expressed himself. He knew in what estimation to hold the strength of the insurrection and the valour of the Spanish troops. He saw their provincial armies dissolved, beaten, and that which remained of them weakened by desertion and the relaxation of discipline. He saw the generals blaming one another for the unfortunate results of their operations, and the people and the soldiers dissatisfied with the junta, and with the chiefs which it had given them. In a word, anarchy and despondency had everywhere taken the place of enthusiasm and confidence; and in proportion as the national cause lost the ground which it had so brilliantly acquired, the French army, full of hope and ardour, was raised, exclusive of reserves, to the enormous amount of 330,000 men.

During the campaign which had ended so disastrously, the national troops, though individually brave, exhibited neither steadiness, nor any other military virtue. Their generals had distinguished themselves by profound ignorance of the art of war, by perpetual quarrels, by excessive self-conceit, and a boasting worthy of the hero

of Cervantes. Except at Saragossa and Girona, the people had, in truth, displayed no sign of forwardness. Everywhere else, as soon as victory declared against them, their energy had degenerated into ferocity. Thus, as in the beginning of the insurrection, assassination, which, in point of fact, originated in private hatred and passion, was excused on the pretext of patriotism. As to the Central Junta, it had rendered itself odious by its inattention to the public good, by its absurd pretensions, and its lamentable disposition to retain old abuses. Hence, after the affair of the Somo-Sierra, the strength and energy of Spain were, to all intents and purposes, blotted out. The capital of Arragon, and the little English army, alone showed themselves firm; while the Emperor flattered himself that he should soon be able to beat down these feeble bulwarks, and secure, by a final triumph, the entire and definitive submission of the Peninsula.

Such was the condition of the country, when General Moore was joined, at Salamanca, by Sir John Hope's column, consisting of all the cavalry of the army, the whole of the artillery, and about 3000 infantry. This column had taken the royal road by Talavera de la Reyna, which traverses the Guadarama, and stretches off by Espinar towards Salamanca. A dangerous route, which the general might have avoided had he reconnoitred in good time the road from Almeida to Ciudad Rodrigo.

Moore had scarcely re-assembled his troops, when intelligence reached him of the destruction of the Spanish armies, and the siege of Madrid, which left him no alternative except either to return in all haste to Lisbon, or to continue the campaign by changing the line of his

retreat. Mr. Frere, the British minister, with the Central Junta, pressed him earnestly to come to the support of Madrid, and Mr. Charles Stuart, another English agent, accredited to the Portuguese government, wrote in the same strain, because he believed that the people of the capital were inclined to make a vigorous defence.

The recommendations of this diplomatist, who was a man of greater caution and sounder judgment than Frere, made some impression upon the English general; but fresh intelligence soon came in, which produced the conviction that a movement upon Madrid would offer slender chances of success, and that even his retreat towards the mouth of the Tagus had become seriously compromised by the presence of Napoleon in the heart of Spain. Sir John, upon this, adopted an arrangement which seemed to offer the best prospect of reconciling his duty to the Spanish nation with the interests of the English troops. He determined to retire upon Corunna, where he would be able to collect ships enough to transport, in case of need, the whole of his army to England. Accordingly, Baird began to move in that direction. But on the 5th of December, a letter was received at headquarters from Frere, which announced that the capital, having resisted a first assault, was preparing to follow the example of Saragossa. This news, extraordinary as it seemed to be, induced the commander-in-chief to make an effort in favour of the people of Madrid. He sent orders to Baird to return to Astorga, and despatched Colonel Graham to Madrid to inquire into the real state of affairs. That officer came back upon the 9th, having ascertained at Cavalera that, two evenings previously, the capital was in the possession of the French; but that the population, nevertheless, preserved an excellent

attitude, and that it would be by no means useless to come to their support. "In consequence of this information," says Lord Londonderry, "Sir John Moore moved off on the 12th, proposing to advance as far as Valladolid, for the purpose of forming a junction with Romano's army and threatening the communications between Madrid and France." He calculated, that by making this diversion in rear of the French, he would force the Emperor to retrace his steps, which would give some respite to the southern provinces, delay the capture of Saragossa, and afford an opportunity to the Spaniards to make a new effort. "I was induced to make this offensive march," he writes, "by regard to the honour of the English arms, and in order to show that they continued faithful to the cause of the Spaniards, long after the Spaniards themselves had regarded it as lost."

It was Moore's intention to reach Valladolid; but, on the 14th, he received at Aaejos, through General Stuart, an intercepted letter from Prince Berthier to the Duke of Dalmatia, which showed that Soult was in a critical position at Saldanha, upon the Carrion. Regarding the contingency as favourable for an offensive movement, Sir John turned towards Mayorga, where Baird's column rejoined him in the course of the 20th. On the 22nd, these combined corps, amounting in all to 23,000 bayonets, 2,278 sabres, and 60 pieces of cannon, were obliged to halt at Sahagun, to wait the arrival of their supplies, nor could the army move again till the evening of the following day.

The plan of Moore embraced a night march, that he might fall at daylight on the 24th upon Soult's corps, of which the effective strength was not supposed to ex-

ceed 12,000 men. But scarcely had he commenced his movement, ere he received a first despatch, announcing that the Duke of Dalmatia had retreated, and a second, from Romana, to inform him that the Emperor was advancing against the allied army, by forced marches. Already, during the 23rd, vague rumours to this effect had prevailed; but Moore was satisfied that there would be time to engage Soult before succours could arrive. The rapid movement of the French army soon undeceived him. Having been apprised, in the course of the 21st, of Moore's offensive movement, the Emperor immediately suspended the execution of his projects upon Lisbon, and the southern provinces of Spain. He assembled, in all haste, 50,000 men, and at the head of that army *d'élite*, crossed the snowy ridges of Guadarama, with the intention of manœuvring in the rear of the English, and of cutting them off from Portugal and the harbours of Galicia.

Setting out on the 22nd, the Emperor arrived on the 28th at Villapando, having accomplished in seven days fifty-nine leagues over detestable roads and under hideous weather. From Tordesillas he wrote, on the 26th, to Marshal Soult: — "If the English still maintain their position, they are lost; if, on the contrary, they attack you, retire to the distance of a day's march, for the more they persist in advancing, the better it will be for you." General Moore, however, was too prudent to be caught in the snare. Advertised of the danger which threatened him, he quitted Sahagun on the evening of the 24th, arrived on the 28th at Benevente, and continued on the following day his retrograde movement, satisfied with having withdrawn the Emperor to a distance from Madrid. When the latter

arrived in the neighbourhood of Valderas, he ascertained, to his sorrow, that, in spite of the rapidity of his movements, he was twelve hours too late; for the English had already passed the Esla. If Napoleon had inclined more to the left, and marched direct upon Benevente, he might have reached that town before the English general. This, however, is an opinion formed after the event, and is not intended to cast the slightest blame upon the illustrious chief of the French army.

On the 29th, Moore overtook at Astorga Baird's column, which had effected its retreat by Valencia, and, on the following day, he was joined in the same village by the corps of Romana. On the 21st the retreat was begun towards Vigo, where transports were collected for the re-embarkation of the troops. The English army took the direction of Manzanal; the army of Galicia, the mountain path towards Fuençebadon.

From the date of Moore's departure from Astorga, the pursuit was entrusted to Ney and to Soult, who conducted it with their usual ability. For Napoleon had been met near that town by a courier, bringing intelligence that Austria was arming and making preparations to take the field at the beginning of the year 1809. Whereupon he resolved to quit the Peninsula, and to return to Paris, that he might superintend the preparations for a new war in Germany. Nevertheless, he halted a few days in Valladolid, in order to satisfy himself that the English persevered in their retreat.

The confined roads traversed by Moore's army rendered it impossible for the French generals to cut in upon him or to take him in flank. This circumstance was the more fortunate for the English, that the magazines distributed along the line of retreat did not afford

to them adequate supplies. Their draught animals and means of subsistence failed, the cavalry were obliged to shoot a great number of their horses, and the infantry, overwrought and almost shoeless, suffered dreadfully from the bad state of the roads, and the snow mixed with rain, which fell largely. To crown the misfortune, the inhabitants of that part of Spain were hostile to the English, who in reprisal committed the mistake of ill-using them. "The barns of the Galician villages," writes Napoleon to his brother, "are full of English, hung up by the peasants in punishment of the horrible atrocities which they have committed." On the 3rd, Moore delivered, near Villa Franca, an affair of the rear guard, which was sharp and skilfully conducted. In the evening of the 5th, his army occupied a strong position in advance of Lugo. Soult might have attacked him with advantage there on the 7th, but he delayed the operation first till the 8th, and then till the 9th. It was presuming too much upon the patience of the enemy. Satisfied with having gained three days, Moore quietly decamped in the night between the 8th and 9th, and moved upon Corunna. He preferred that port to Vigo, where, however, the transports were assembled, because the distance from Lugo to Vigo is double that between Lugo and Corunna, and because the route to Vigo was impracticable for wheeled carriages.

After quitting Lugo, indiscipline and want of order became extreme. Nevertheless, when the army arrived on the 12th in sight of Corunna, Moore, though his troops were worn down with fatigue, and the transports were kept at sea by contrary winds, steadily rejected a proposition that was made to him by his principal officers, to negotiate with Soult a convention

similar to that of Vimiera. At that moment his force did not exceed 14,500 men; Soult had more than 20,000, but as they were too much fatigued and dispersed to enter at once into action, he found it necessary to wait during the 13th, 14th, and 15th for the coming up of his stragglers. Meanwhile the English fleet entered the harbour. If the Duke of Dalmatia had acted with greater vigour, he might have anticipated that event, and rendered the check which the English received much more disastrous.

General Moore occupied a tolerably advantageous position in advance of the town; but his artillery was weak and his cavalry destroyed. Soult attacked him vigorously on the 16th, two hours after noon. His principal object was to turn the right of the English, which he found to be the weak point in their order of battle; but, having completely failed in that attempt, he was obliged, after four hours' hard fighting, to retire before a brilliant charge of the English reserve, under the orders of General Paget. Moore's loss, according to Lord Londonderry, amounted to about 800 men; that of the enemy to more than double. The English army remained master of the field of battle, and was able to embark the following night without sustaining any further loss. But its chief did not accompany it. He fell gloriously at the end of the day, while cheering on the 42nd Regiment of the line to the charge. Though his left shoulder was broken by a round shot, and he suffered terribly from the wound, Sir John Moore did not permit himself to be carried from the field till he saw that his troops were gaining ground upon the enemy. Exhausted by that last effort, he died a few minutes afterwards, with the

calmness and serenity of a man who is conscious that he has nobly done his duty. "I hope," said he, "that the English people will be satisfied, and that my country will do me justice." They buried him in a bastion, by the light of torches, amid the last reports of a distant cannonade. By and by Marshal Soult caused a monument to be erected over the place where the hero had fallen.

The English soldiers displayed at Corunna a steadiness which could not have been expected, after the scenes of disorder which had marked a portion of their retreat. Indeed, it is exactly because of these lamentable scenes that many authors, and especially the impartial Jomini, describes Moore's retreat as neither more nor less than a flight. But truth protests against the assertion. An army, consisting of young soldiers, and commanded by inexperienced officers,—which sustained during eleven days, unshaken, the pursuit of a superior force of veteran troops, led by such chiefs as Ney and Soult — which, in spite of the vivacity of that pursuit, accomplished six leagues and a half in twenty-four hours, and rested three days out of the eleven,— which, at the end of its journey, maintained a fierce combat, and re-embarked in presence of the enemy, — which, to sum up all, suffered no disaster, and left behind, from the commencement of the campaign, only 4033 men; — such an army cannot be said to have fled, or even to have made a precipitate retreat. Besides, Marshal Soult has borne noble testimony to the merit of General Moore, so unworthily calumniated by his own countrymen. "Sir John," he says, "profited by every advantage of ground to offer an active and vigorous resistance, and ended by falling in a battle which ought to

insure lasting honour to his memory." The English historians, Londonderry, Alison, and Southey, on the other hand, have treated Moore with excessive severity; and yet, apart from his irresolution at Salamanca, there is nothing with which he can be reproached. The disorders which signalised his retreat from Lugo ought to be attributed entirely to the inexperience of the officers and the soldiers; and to the relaxation of discipline, which excessive fatigue, the severity of the weather, the bad state of the roads, and the want of provisions, all tended to augment. These disorders, common enough in the English army, which Wellington himself was more than once unable to prevent, did not, however, affect either the courage or the moral strength of the troops, as the combats at Lugo and Corunna distinctly prove.

To return. The expedition of Sir John Moore casts no stain on the military honour of Great Britain; yet, as has been fairly observed by the author of the "Consulate and the Empire," it lowered the English a good deal, politically considered, in the eyes of the Spaniards, and induced a belief, for the moment at least, that they were incapable of saving the Peninsula. On the other hand, the disasters of the short campaign of Somo-Sierra and Corunna produced this happy result, that it satisfied the English people that an army of volunteers, even if it were composed of the heroes of Baylen and Saragossa, would not be able to maintain a successful combat against Napoleon. And this conviction it was, combined with the hope which the English government entertained, of a speedy rupture between France and Austria, which decided Great Britain to

make still larger sacrifices, in order to bring the war to a triumphant issue.

Immediately on the embarkation of Moore's troops, the important places of Corunna and Ferol fell into the hands of the enemy, and Galicia, for a long time afterwards, showed no more sign of life. Thus in three months the French destroyed three Castilian armies; took Madrid, drove away the English, carried Saragossa, defeated Vives and Reding in Catalonia, occupied Galicia, and struck terror throughout the Peninsula. Indeed, a celebrated Spanish historian frankly acknowledges, that the result of the campaign was to make manifest the unskilfulness of the native generals, the inexperience of the troops, and the complete neglect with which former governments had treated both the war department and every other branch of administration in the country.*

On the recall of Dalrymple, Burrard, Wellesley, and Spencer, Sir John Craddock was charged with the conduct of military affairs in Portugal. His instructions were to reinforce Moore's army, and himself to conduct the operations, if the course of events should bring back the war to Portugal; but the proceedings of the English government proved to be so dilatory, that the 5th of December arrived before Moore could reach Corunna.

The first inquiries instituted by Craddock satisfied him that there was no life in the regency; that the people lacked enthusiasm, and that the army, in regard to numbers, organisation, and discipline, was in the most unsatisfactory state. Confusion and anarchy prevailed in all quarters. The cabinet of London, Mr.

* Count Toreno.

Frere, their principal agent, the Bishop of Oporto, and even *employés* of a secondary rank, took it upon them to form plans of campaign, and to press them upon the commander-in-chief. "Each week," says Napier, "brought some new project to light, and the generals were the only persons who had no power to direct military operations." The turbulent faction of the bishop, entirely hostile to the English, succeeded in stirring up the populace of Oporto and of Lisbon against them; and renewed in these cities the scenes of violence which had marked the occupation of the capital by the French army. At last the embarrassment of the situation became such, that the cabinet of St. James's, took secret measures for the abandonment of Portugal, in the event of the enemy presenting himself there again. Now then, at length, the regency made serious efforts to rouse the national spirit, and to organise the means of defence upon a solid foundation. It ordered, among other things, a levy *en masse* of all citizens between the ages of eighteen and sixty. It pronounced the penalty of death against such as should refuse to march, and decreed, over and above, that every village which gave shelter to the enemy should be burnt. In reply to a demand made by one of the English agents, the regency announced to the cabinet of London its intention to give the command of all the national forces to a British general, and to invest him with authority to change and improve the discipline, to name the officers, —in a word, to act without control. The junta proposed to commit this trust to Sir Arthur Wellesley; but he, not wishing to accept an employment which would absorb all his time, recommended to the ministers General Beresford, whose talents and activity, in an

especial manner, qualified him for the task. That general had besides acquired the esteem and confidence of the army by his good service in the West Indies, in Egypt, at the Cape of Good Hope, in America, and still more recently in Portugal, where he had made the unfortunate campaign of 1809, under Sir John Moore.

Beresford landed at Lisbon in the month of March, and his first care was to nominate Englishmen to all important military posts. With the assistance of these officers he modified, by little and little, the organisation and equipment of the national troops, who became, under his able management, as distinguished for their bravery as for their discipline and intelligence.

The success of this experiment, and still more the declaration of war by Austria, could not fail to exercise a beneficial influence upon the English government; nevertheless the precipitate retreat of Moore, the dispersion of the patriots, and the occupation of Madrid, had chilled, in a striking degree, popular enthusiasm. By one of those sudden revulsions, of which the history of Great Britain presents so many examples, the nation had passed, in a moment, from a state of extreme confidence to one of irrepressible alarm and discouragement. Even those who had been the most eager to push on the war, appeared now to have become convinced that it was useless to contend any more with Napoleon on the continent. And so staggered was the government by these declarations, that it was on the point of recalling its troops to England. But before having recourse to such an extreme measure, it was considered advisable to consult Sir Arthur Wellesley, who, in a memoir, dated 7th March, 1809, not only maintained the possibility of defending Portugal under all circumstances, but

explained, with great precision, how that defence could be arranged, how new forces could be created, how the finances of the country might be improved, and the allied troops subsisted in the midst of provinces impoverished and laid waste. "With his rare good sense," says M. Thiers, "he had perceived all along how the English ought to conduct themselves in the Peninsula; and, in defiance of the opinions of those whom Moore's expedition had frightened, he affirmed that there would always be time to re-embark the army, by sacrificing more or less of its *matériel*." He even went so far as to mark out, in a manner well nigh prophetic, a position in which, supported by the sea and covered by intrenchments, he should be able to maintain himself many years against the victorious armies of the empire. The confidence which inspired Sir Arthur Wellesley, his firm and sagacious intellect, overcame the repugnance of the government to risk a new army in the Peninsula, and disposed it to defend, with becoming courage, the interests of the English nation against the nation itself.

On the 9th of January, 1809, the cabinet of London concluded a treaty of peace and alliance with Spain: at the same time it made vast military preparations, in order that Great Britain might henceforth play the principal part in the contest. It was an act of energy and courage by which, let us say it to his honour, the minister undertook a responsibility which, had the slightest reverse or the smallest mishap occurred, would have resulted in his ruin. Nor was this result so little certain as not to create misgivings in many statesmen, even among those who affected the most ardent love for the Spanish cause. For England could, in point of fact, oppose not more than 60,000 com-

batants to 300,000 men, whom Napoleon had disposable; and it must further be remembered that these soldiers were without experience in European war. As to the Spanish troops, they were without discipline, badly equipped, badly organised. They were commanded by incapable chiefs, and manifested no sympathy for the English army. But that which more than all the rest rendered the situation of the government delicate and precarious, was the violence of the opposition, which thwarted unceasingly the efforts of the cabinet, and, as a necessary consequence, threw the greatest embarrassments in the way of the commander-in-chief.

Arthur Wellesley was marked out, by the voice of the public, as the only man capable of bringing such an attempt to a successful issue; and the minister, in ratifying that choice, did for the Spanish cause what the Directory did for the cause of the French Revolution, when it placed the youthful Buonaparte at the head of the army of Italy.

CHAP. VIII.

SECOND INVASION OF PORTUGAL BY THE FRENCH. — SOULT PASSES THE MINHO, AND ENTERS OPORTO. — THE PASSAGE OF THE DOURO BY WELLESLEY, AND DISASTROUS RETREAT OF THE FRENCH. — HE TURNS TO OPPOSE VICTOR, WHO IS APPROACHING LISBON BY THE VALLEY OF THE TAGUS. — COMBINED OPERATIONS OF WELLESLEY AND CUESTA. — INCAPACITY OF THE LATTER. — NEGLIGENCE OF THE CENTRAL JUNTA. — UNSATISFACTORY STATE OF THE ENGLISH ARMY. — BATTLE OF TALAVERA DE LA REYNA. — PASSAGE OF THE TAGUS AT ARZOBISPO, AND THE RETREAT UPON BADAJOZ. — UNFORTUNATE CONDITION OF THE ENGLISH ARMY. — DEFEATS OF THE SPANIARDS AT BANOS, ALMONA CID, OCANA. — ALBA DE TORMÈS. — WELLESLEY MOVES TO THE NORTH TO COVER ALMEIDA AND CIUDAD RODRIGO. — INVASION OF ANDALUSIA BY THE FRENCH. — CHANGE OF MINISTERS IN LONDON. — MARQUIS WELLESLEY BECOMES FOREIGN SECRETARY. — THE CAMPAIGN OF TALAVERA BLAMED IN PARLIAMENT, BUT THE CABINET IS AUTHORISED TO CONTINUE THE WAR.

As soon as Wellesley was informed of his nomination to the chief command of the Peninsular army, he resigned his seat in parliament and the chief secretaryship of Ireland, which he had hitherto retained. He embarked at Portsmouth on the 16th of April, and, after an extremely dangerous passage, entered the Tagus on the 22nd. The inhabitants of Lisbon received him with every demonstration of joy. The confidence which they reposed in his talents and character reanimated their failing energies, and awakened in them the hope of a speedy improvement in their own condition. Nor did Wellesley overlook any thing which had a tendency to keep up and justify that confidence, the first pledge of suc-

cess; yet the difficulties which beset him on every side were immense; for the opinions universally entertained concerning the nature of the war, the position of the belligerents, and the means necessary for arriving at a successful result, were wild in the extreme.

The Portuguese government and nation desired, above all things, to strike at the French in Spain, leaning upon Cadiz and Gibraltar as their *points d'appui*. Wellesley, on the other hand, believed that, in order to deliver the Peninsula, he ought to establish himself in Portugal; and that Lisbon was the proper base, where his troops could be safely landed, and his general dépôt formed. He stood almost alone in this opinion. Among his own officers, some contended, on the authority of Sir John Moore, that it was impossible to maintain themselves in Portugal; others, that, apart from Gibraltar and Cadiz, there was not in the Peninsula a single position capable of giving proper support to a system of operations against the French army. Wellesley, however, remained immovable in his determination to defend Portugal, though by so doing he exposed himself, in the event of the slightest reverse, to the censure of his own government, of his army, and of the Portuguese nation. Such moral courage, rising out of a clear judgment and a settled conviction of what was right, did the highest honour to the English general, and deserves to be recorded as the main cause of his success in the Peninsula.

Before entering upon a narrative of the memorable campaign of 1809, it may not be amiss if we take a rapid survey of the events which befell subsequently to the retreat of Sir John Moore.

Napoleon, believing that his many and rapid suc-

cesses in the campaign of Somo-Sierra had calmed down the enthusiasm of the English and forced their government to renounce for a while, if not for ever, its projects of intervention, directed Marshal Soult to occupy Lisbon, and to avenge the disaster of Vimiera; while the other generals should pacify the provinces already conquered, and utterly disperse the fragments of the Spanish army. The instructions issued to the Duke of Dalmatia required that he should be ready to enter Oporto on the 5th of February; that on the day of his arrival there he should direct Lapisse, whose division lay in Salamanca, to march upon Ciudad Rodrigo and Abrantes; that Victor should call in Lapisse's division to Merida, and attempt, with 30,000 men on that side, a diversion in favour of Soult, as soon as the latter should have approached Lisbon; that he should push a strong column towards that city, if there should be reason to apprehend any serious obstacles to its occupation; and that, after the embarkation of the allies, he should march upon Seville by Merida, supported by a portion of Soult's army.

This plan, ably conceived, had every chance of success, and the more so that the Anglo-Portuguese troops were not in a condition to resist for a single hour the attack of 15,000 French. But time and circumstances interfered, so that it was not executed with the promptitude which was necessary. The corps of Marshal Soult stood in need of rest, having suffered much from cold and fatigue; the roads were miserable, the rivers had overflowed their banks; the French troops were in the heart of a country everywhere hostile; and, to march in force upon Oporto, it would be necessary

to abandon, for the moment, all communication with Galicia.

These difficulties did not permit the marshal to enter Oporto on the 5th of February, as Napoleon had required. Indeed, it was only on the 15th that he was in a condition to pass the Minho; and an attempt made on that day at Campo Sancos having been defeated by the violence of the current, Soult decided on penetrating into Portugal through the province of Tras-os-montes. His columns, therefore, took the road to Orenza; but the population of that part of Galicia, stirred up by the inhabitants of the frontier and by detachments from Romana's army, had resumed their arms. It was necessary to halt several days, in order to repress an insurrection which might compromise the line of retreat. Accordingly, the 4th of March arrived before the army could commence its offensive movement; and after all, having lost many horses, through the failure of forage and the bad state of the roads, it found itself obliged to leave all the reserve artillery, with a part of its baggage, at Tuy.

Soult's first manœuvre was to drive back Romana and Sylviera, who covered the road to Chaves, and might have fallen upon his flank or rear. He next dispersed, without the slightest difficulty, some tumultuous bands of Ordinanzas; after which he continued his march upon Oporto, which was his main strategic point. On the 13th, the French army entered Chaves, and on the 20th defeated, at half a league from Braga, 35,000 Portuguese, half of whom were armed only with pikes. The same day Soult took possession of the city. On the 28th his army appeared before Oporto, which the bishop had covered with a line of redoubts, — disposed without skill, but defended by 40,000 men and 200

pieces of cannon. The marshal attacked the intrenched camp on the 29th with 20,000 men, who still remained to him out of the 25,500 which had crossed the Minho. He forced the position and made himself master of the town, where he found abundance of food and ammunition, as well as immense warlike stores imported from England, and a number of ships laden with wine.

This important success cost the marshal only from 300 to 400 men; the Portuguese lost between 9000 and 10,000. Unfortunately, the French troops, exasperated by the bad treatment to which some prisoners had been subjected, tarnished the renown of their victory by acts of unheard-of brigandage. In the palace of the bishop alone, 200 Portuguese were put to the sword, — a sad result of wars of this sort, which often compel such as desire to escape cruelty to become cruel themselves.

Soult had assumed at Chaves the title of Governor-General of Portugal. Attaching to that title a meaning which was, perhaps, not quite in unison with his strictly military mission, he applied all his energies to tranquillise the people, and to render them well disposed to the government of the Emperor. Indeed there is not wanting evidence to show that he so far exaggerated the importance of the part assigned to him as to look forward to the crown of Portugal as the reward of his exertions. The soldiers, who remembered how Junot's self-love had suffered from having fallen into a similar delusion, made game of Soult, and called him ironically by the title of Nicholas the First.

Meanwhile Victor was at Talavera de la Reyna, where he waited, in conformity with the Emperor's instructions, till the Duke of Dalmatia should have reached Oporto.

If he had succeeded in moving a little nearer to Merida, he might have driven Cuesta into the Sierra Morena, and probably occupied Badajoz, which was as yet destitute of the means of defence. But it was only on the 14th of March that, in obedience to the king's commands, his leading division crossed the Tagus at Arzobispo and Talavera, in order to drive the Spaniards from the other side, and protect the construction of a flying bridge at Almaraz. By that bridge, in the night between the 19th and 20th, the whole of Victor's army passed the river; whereupon Cuesta, having been unable to stop them, retired upon Villa Nueva de Serena, where, on the evening of the 27th, he was joined by the corps of Albuquerque. The Duke of Belluno neglected to follow him; and Cuesta was encouraged by that blunder well nigh to assume the offensive. But the Spanish general, in his turn, committed the fault of halting at Medellin to cover Badajoz, about which he was uneasy. This delay ruined him; for had he only continued his able movement, he might have beaten the scattered divisions of Victor, and changed, perhaps, the whole fortunes of the campaign.

On the 28th, the Spanish army, about 25,000 strong, with 400 horse and 20 pieces of cannon, was attacked by Victor, whose effective force amounted to 14,000 infantry, 2500 cavalry, and 42 guns. Though inferior in point of numbers, he more than made up for that deficiency by the quality of his soldiers. The battle was murderous; and the Spanish troops, with the exception of a portion of the cavalry which faced about at the moment of charging, conducted themselves gallantly. The main cause of their defeat was the ridiculous order of battle which Cuesta had adopted. "He caused his army to deploy," says the Count de Toreno, "upon a line a full

league in extent, in the form of a half-moon, without retaining the smallest body in reserve."

The Duke de Belluno, writing to the king, 2nd of April, 1809, speaks thus of his victory:—"I informed your Majesty that the killed amounted to ten or twelve thousand men. I believe that I was mistaken, and that the number greatly exceeds this. All the officers who have visited the field of battle agree with me, that the spectacle is really hideous; yet it must not be supposed that there was any cruel massacre of prisoners. The slain defended themselves to the last extremity, crying out, in very good French, 'No quarter!' Cuesta, without doubt, had taught them this cry, with which their existence terminated, and which was neither more nor less than the consequence of the decree of the 10th of last February by the Junta of Seville, which condemned the whole French army, without exception, to death."

The evening after this catastrophe, on the 27th of March, Cartajal, at the head of 12,000 men, was defeated at Ciudad Real, by 10,000 French under the orders of Sebastiani. A great many Spanish soldiers fell in the battle, and about 3000 perished during the retreat. These successive disasters spread terror up to the gates of Seville. Meanwhile, however, General Lapisse had very indifferently accomplished the Emperor's purposes. His division was intended to support the armies of Soult and the Duke of Belluno; and, in order to effect that object, he ought to have marched upon Abrantes: but, disregarding his instructions, he moved upon Alcantara and Merida, where, in the course of the 19th, he formed a junction with the former corps.

In spite of this concentration, the king found himself unable to move; partly because the north, excited by

the news of the Austrian war, was on the point of escaping from his grasp, partly because he had received no tidings of Soult, without whose co-operation the great object of the campaign could not be attained. Joseph would not have found himself in this situation, and events might have taken a different turn, if the Duke of Dalmatia, by neglecting to follow up Romana after their encounter, had not permitted that general to interrupt all communication between the armies of the centre and the south and those of the north. Still, giving its full weight to this circumstance, there is no defending the mistake which left the Duke of Belluno's corps so long inactive, since, by advancing it beyond the Alentejo, Wellesley might have been prevented from overwhelming the feeble army of the Douro. At the same time it is just to observe that this mistake, which many historians, and among the rest Napier, have attributed to King Joseph, was the result of positive instructions communicated to that prince by the Emperor himself. Like all other instructions of the kind, these laboured under the disadvantage of being made subordinate to eventualities which could not be, and, in point of fact, never were realised. On the other hand, neither Joseph nor his advisers possessed sufficient power or genius to modify, according to the exigencies of the case, the orders of their master. And so it came to pass that the necessity under which the Emperor laboured of conducting the Spanish war from a distance proved to be one of the principal causes of the failure of the French armies. We shall have ample opportunity by and by of proving this fact.

Meanwhile Soult, having established his communications with Tuy, forced the passage of the Amarante, pushed back Sylviera across the Douro, and made all the

arrangements necessary for carrying on the war systematically from the excellent base which he had secured for himself in Oporto. If, however, on the one hand, he deserved great praise for his offensive movement upon Braga, and for boldly trusting to success in it to re-open his communications with Galicia, he is much to be blamed, on the other hand, for wasting precious time at Oporto in attending to administrative affairs, and seeking for information concerning the movements of the enemy. This delay, for which he accounts by the state of ignorance in which he found himself with regard to the position of the corps intended to support him, exercised the most vexatious influence upon the result of the campaign. It enabled General Craddock to receive fresh reinforcements, and stimulated the Portuguese and Spaniards to undertake an offensive movement upon Leiria.

Napoleon and Marshal Jourdan both criticise Soult severely for waiting till events should have decided for him whether it would be more judicious to retreat or to push his conquests further. They appear to think that he ought to have fallen back behind the Minho, or reascended by Braganza, towards old Castille, in order to connect himself with the main bodies of the French armies operating in the centre of Spain. Now though this criticism, delivered after the event, be more wise than equitable, it is certain, nevertheless, that Soult, by his prolonged stay in Oporto, occasioned great mischief to the French armies; but that which would, under all circumstances, have proved fatal to them, was the opportune arrival of the victor of Rorissa and Vimiera.

At the period of Wellesley's disembarkation in the

Tagus, Portugal appeared to have lost all confidence in the support of England. Her army was not merely disorganised; it had almost ceased to exist. The pay of the officers, besides being constantly in arrear, was scarcely equal to that of sergeants, or even of private soldiers, in the British service. But the constructive genius of Wellesley changed, in a few days, the whole aspect of affairs. The people regained courage, and the Regency, cast down for a moment, reassured itself. Sir Arthur Wellesley was appointed marshal-general of the Portuguese troops; and these troops, under so able a chief, seconded by the intelligent co-operation of Beresford, acquired, in a short time, great steadiness.

The new commander-in-chief was not slow in perceiving that the false move of Lapisse, upon Merida, had deranged all the combinations of the French, and placed an entire people, their fortresses, and troops, between Soult and Victor. He himself, occupying a central position, had it in his power to advance against one of these marshals before he could be joined by the other. Victor was the more formidable of the two, and his army had but one obstacle to overcome before reaching Lisbon, viz. — the Tagus, which is almost always fordable; whereas Soult, with an inferior army, separated by seventy-five leagues from the capital, could not reach that point except by traversing a country intersected by mountains, defiles, and rivers swollen by the rains. Though this consideration ought to have induced Wellesley to throw himself, in the first instance, upon the Duke of Belluno, he determined, agreeably to the advice of Beresford, and contrary to that of Cuesta and the Spanish government, to march against Soult, who occupied a rich province, whence

the English drew the larger proportion of their cattle. Besides, there had been formed, in the Entre-Minho-e-Douro, a French party, which it was of importance at once to break up; and, finally, the people in the Regency, greatly distressed by the capture and sack of Oporto, the second city of the kingdom, loudly expressed their desire to retake it.

After making all the necessary arrangements to stop the Duke of Belluno, or at all events to interrupt his movement upon Lisbon, should he attempt one, Wellesley directed the allied troops to concentrate and to march towards the Douro. Between the 2nd and 5th of May, 13,000 English, 9000 Portuguese, and 3000 Germans, were assembled at Coimbra. The position of Soult, at this moment, was by no means encouraging. His soldiers, grown impatient, began to murmur; indeed some of them went so far as to engage in a conspiracy to depose the marshal, and put an end to the absolute power of Napoleon. They were chiefly the old republicans of the army of the Rhine who conceived these projects, being disgusted with labours which were no longer directed to advance the greatness of their country, and which seemed to them undertaken for the single purpose of elevating the house of Buonaparte above all the other reigning families of Europe. "The glory to be acquired by that policy," says M. Thiers, "concealed for a moment its emptiness or egotism; reverses awakened reflection, and reflection produced disgust." It is not difficult to understand the danger which accompanied this troublesome attempt at opposition, relaxing, as it did, the bands of discipline, and weakening the ardour of the troops in an enemy's country, and in the presence of a compact army, under

the command of such a general as Wellesley. At the head of the plot, the authors of which took the name of Philadelphi, were Captain d'Argenton, and some superior officers, all of them dissatisfied with their chief. D'Argenton sought an interview with the English general, at Coimbra, and proposed that he should favour, by the movements of the allied troops, the secret views of the conspiracy. But Wellesley answered, that his operations could never be trammelled by such schemes, and that he must treat the French army as an enemy so long as it should remain in Portugal. "At the same time," he added, "if the army should declare against Buonaparte, there would be no difficulty in making such arrangements as would facilitate its retreat."

The confidence reposed by D'Argenton in General Lefevre led to the discovery of the plot, and occasioned the arrest of the ringleaders before their machinations could produce any result. The English general, however, knew how to affix its right value on the information which the conspirators had given him. "Though, with his usual good sense, he treated it as gross exaggeration, he saw clearly enough that Napoleon's policy of conquest was condemned even by the French army; that the army itself was divided; that the bands of discipline were much relaxed, that military duty, however brave the soldiers might be, was very little understood, and that, without expecting a serious revolt, he might arrive at something more probable and unfortunately more practicable, viz.— the surprise of the French in the midst of the city of Oporto, and the inflicting on them a humiliating reverse."*

Soult knew nothing whatever of the concentration of

* Thiers' "History of the Consulate and the Empire."

the enemy's forces at Coimbra. His army, spread out between the Vouga and the Tamega, the Douro and the Lima, occupied a position, of which the extremities could communicate only by the bridge of boats at Oporto. Observing that he persisted in maintaining that extended line, Wellesley conceived the hope of being able to surround him; or, at all events, of forcing him to a disastrous retreat. With this view he directed Beresford, at the head of 6000 Portuguese, two English battalions, five companies of riflemen, and a squadron of heavy cavalry, to move by Viseu upon Lamego, that he might there cross the Douro, and join Sylviera, who was supposed to be in the neighbourhood of Amarante. This movement had for its object to turn the left flank of the French, to interpose between them and Tras-os-montes, and to divert their attention from Oporto, where the general-in-chief intended to crush their right wing with 14,500 infantry, 1500 cavalry, and 24 pieces of cannon. As soon as this operation should have been completed, and the detached column established in the province of Entre-Minho-e-Douro, the rest of the troops were to advance from Coimbra upon Oporto, by the great road between Vouga and Aveiro. "Beresford," says Lord Londonderry, "was ordered to descend the Douro, and to seize every boat which lay along its shores, and so arrange them as that the means of crossing might be at our disposal as soon as we should reach the banks of the river." The plan, according to Jomini, was well conceived, and the troops so distributed as to ensure success.

On the evening of the 4th, intelligence arrived that Sylviera had been completely beaten at Amarante, and that Soult was making preparations to abandon

Oporto. This news obliged the commander-in-chief to modify some of his dispositions. He decided that his army should advance in two columns upon the Douro; one by Aveiro, the other by Vouga; while Beresford, keeping a day's march ahead of them with his advanced guard, should push by Viseu upon Lamego. At daybreak, on the 6th, Beresford moved off; and on the 7th, the whole army began its march, in the order agreed upon. Hill directed his column upon Aveiro, while Wellesley, with the main body, followed the great road. Both halted on the 8th, to give time to their colleagues to gain the Upper Douro before the commencement of the attack. During the night of the 9th, Wellesley's corps arrived at Vouga; the same day Hill, who commanded the leading column, embarked his troops at Aveiro, to cross the Lake Ovar, and to turn at an early hour on the morrow the enemy's right flank. Finally, Beresford formed a junction with Wilson, pushed Loison back upon Amarante, and uncovered Soult's left. By these able and rapid movements, the allied army doubled up in a few days the French corps which had established itself between the Vouga and the Douro.

Meanwhile, Soult, made aware, on the 8th, of the arrival of the English, destroyed the bridge of boats at Oporto; and, as if there had been nothing more to apprehend, fixed his departure for the 12th. He proposed to himself to march upon Mirandella and Braganza, that he might re-enter the kingdom of Leon by Zamora. It was with a view to facilitate that project that Loison, on the 2nd, pushed back by a bold stroke the troops of Sylviera, and seized the bridge of Amarante. That bridge, towards which Soult afterwards

directed his artillery and baggage, was the only means left to the French army of escaping with honour from the perilous situation in which it found itself. Nevertheless, Loison was so weak as to abandon it, without firing a shot, to Marshal Beresford, who subsequently to the 10th had rejoined Sylviera on the left bank of the Tamega.

On the 12th, the two armies found themselves face to face, separated only by the Douro, a deep and rapid river, of which the width in front of Oporto is upwards of 320 yards. To cross such a river without a bridge train, and in the presence of 20,000 veterans, was an enterprise so far removed from the common course of things, that Soult entertained no apprehension respecting it. Indeed his sole anxiety seemed to be lest an attempt should be made to disembark from the seaboard. Hence, in all probability, his carelessness in watching the whole front of his position, though he could not be ignorant that the enemy was close to him, and though within the short space of three days the discovery of D'Argenton's plot had been effected. Wellesley, on the other hand, was afraid, if he did not hasten his passage of the river, that Soult, by a rapid march, might carry his whole force against Beresford, and this consideration alone decided him upon undertaking an operation which French authors themselves have described as bold even to rashness.

He reconnoitred the river, and discovered on the enemy's bank an unfinished building, called "The Seminary," which domineered over the surrounding country, and commanded especially the line of the enemy's retreat. This building, surrounded by a high wall, which stretched down on either side towards the river, formed

an enclosure large enough to serve as a temporary *tête-du-pont* for two battalions. It was besides so situated, that under cover of the mountain of Serra, the Douro might be passed without exposure to the view of the city. This same mountain, moreover, offered a favourable position whence a plunging fire of artillery could be directed upon the left flank of the Seminary, and upon the space included within the enclosure walls. Wellesley at once perceived the advantages of that position, and turned them to excellent account. The great difficulty for him was to find the means of passing, and chance happily assisted him. Colonel Waters, a staff officer, distinguished for his courage and presence of mind, discovered, about two miles above the place, a boat filled with mud, and hidden among the rushes. He requested some peasants to get it afloat, and to go with him to the other side; but the peasants hesitated, till the Prior of Amarante came up and decided them to follow the English colonel, by placing himself at the disposal of that officer. Assisted by these brave men, Waters crossed the river, and discovered upon the enemy's bank four large barges unguarded, which he succeeded, without attracting attention, in bringing away. As soon as Wellesley was informed of that proceeding, he directed General Murray to push for Avintas, with a battalion of the German Legion, a squadron of light cavalry, and two six-pounders; to cross the river at that point by the ferry-boat, or by any other means which he could command; to collect the vessels required for the passage of the rest of the army, and finally to fall by surprise upon the enemy's flank, while the mass of the allied troops attacked him in front.

Twenty guns were mounted upon the Serra, and as

PASSAGE OF THE DOURO.

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Scale of two English miles.
to Guimaraens
to Braga
Villa do Conde
OPORTO
to Amarante
RIO DOURO
Villa Nova
Serra
to Coimbra
Church of Avintas
Explanation.
A Arrival of the right column (from Coimbra).
B left (from the side of Aveiro).
C Troops under Gen. John Murray.
D Ferry where Gen. Paget crossed the Douro.
E Hill and Stewart crossed the Douro.
a Position of the French artillery.
b Attack of the French upon the troops of Paget.
c Retreat of the French.
O Passage of the troops under Gen. Sherbrooke.

soon as they were placed in battery, the first barge, laden with twenty-five men, passed the river unnoticed. The second was equally fortunate, but the third, with General Paget on board, attracted the enemy's attention. The French staff, however, treated the discovery with indifference. Convinced that the English army could not cross the river, except by the assistance of the fleet, and below the position, these gentlemen refused to believe that a passage was effected in front of the town, and would not be undeceived till Foy, mounting the height which faces the convent of Serra, announced that the Seminary building was already filled with English troops. At this intelligence, the alarm was given and the troops stood to their arms. Bodies of tirailleurs threw themselves upon the menaced point, and columns were rapidly formed to support them. But the fire of the twenty pieces of cannon established upon the Serra proved so murderous, that the assailants were obliged to limit their attack to an assault upon the gate. General Paget, who held the building with a single battalion, defended himself against this attack with great obstinacy. By and by, however, a wound compelled him to quit the field; but, at the same moment, General Hill arrived with two regiments of his own brigade, a battalion of Portuguese, and a battalion of Stuart's brigade. This reinforcement, supported by the cannon from the other side, restored to the Allies their superiority in the battle.

While these things were going on, Sherbrooke's troops, assisted by the inhabitants of Oporto, had crossed the Douro in front of Villa Nova, and forced the enemy to retire in the greatest confusion towards Amarante, abandoning five pieces of cannon, eight

caissons, a considerable number of prisoners, and all their wounded. General Laborde had resisted the attack with rare intrepidity; but his conduct, admirable as it was, could not save the army from the disgrace of a surprise "without example in the annals of war."*

While Sherbrooke's troops were pressing hard upon Soult's rear, General Hill inflicted great loss upon the main body, which was obliged to pass under the fire of the Seminary. On the right, Murray's detachment formed itself on the flank of the line of retreat; the rest of the English army crossed the river at various points; while the artillery from Mount Serra plunged among the enemy's ranks as often as they came within range. If Murray had fallen at that moment upon the disorderly column of march, Marshal Soult would have been completely beaten. Wellesley might have repaired this fault by giving Murray positive orders to pursue, or by himself pursuing the French; but not wishing to run any risks, he halted twenty-four hours in order to rest his men and horses, and to give time for his provisions, artillery, and baggage, now far in the rear, to overtake him. "There was besides," says Napier, "a political reason for this conduct; the English Cabinet, however improvident it might be in its preparations, entertained the most nervous apprehension of a reverse, and its general did not venture, except for an object of the first importance, to risk a single brigade, fearful lest such a loss might bring about the recall of the army. We find traces of the ministerial incapacity to which Wellesley was obliged to submit, as far as the date of the battle of Salamanca, in that appearance of

* Thiers.

excessive prudence which military writers censure as a fault, and which Napoleon himself so completely mistook for a trait characteristic of the man, that he reprimanded his generals because they had failed to take advantage of it."

The passage of the Douro, so happily effected, cost the French 500 men in killed and wounded. Over and above the field-pieces and caissons abandoned in the fight before the town, they left fifty guns in the arsenal and 700 sick in the hospitals. The loss on the side of the English did not exceed twenty killed and twenty-five wounded; indeed, the surprise was so complete, that at four o'clock in the afternoon Wellesley dined comfortably at the table which had been prepared for Marshal Soult.

Rarely had the English general exhibited greater courage and coolness than in that affair. He might, indeed, be said to convict himself of extreme rashness in trusting to chance for finding some boats upon the Douro, and in attacking 20,000 French, commanded by an illustrious marshal, without having a single ford or bridge in his rear. "He knew," says Lord Londonderry, "that the hardihood of his plan insured its success, and that the fate of Beresford depended upon the promptitude of his own movements; if he had adopted the measures which Soult proposed for him, by crossing the Douro at its mouth, with the assistance of the fleet, he would have lost two days, and the French army might have retired in good order."

In the evening Wellesley received at Oporto, which was lighted up in token of rejoicing, the same enthusiastic reception which distinguished the whole of his march from Lisbon.

One of the first cares of the commander-in-chief was to give protection to the wounded French, whom the populace were eager to ill-treat. He issued a proclamation, in which he said to the people: "I entreat you to be merciful; by the laws of war, the French have a right to my protection, and I am determined to afford it."

Meanwhile Soult became aware of the evacuation of Amarante only when at nightfall he arrived at Balthar. Nothing could be more unfortunate for him, because, in order to gain the direct road from Oporto to Tuy, by Braga, he would be obliged to retrace his steps to the neighbourhood of the city. M. Thiers is of opinion that he ought to have run the risk; we, on the contrary, believe that he did well to avoid it, and to adopt the extreme measure of debouching by the Braga road, across a chain of hills, where infantry alone could act.

On his arrival at Penafiel the marshal caused all his guns to be destroyed, as well as the greater part of his ammunition and baggage, in order that he might reach Mont Allegre by way of Orense, and avoid Chaves, where Beresford had preceded him. When Wellesley became aware of this determination, which he did in the course of the 15th, he understood at once that it would be difficult to follow the French army, inasmuch "as it is obvious that, if an army throws away all its cannon, equipments and baggage, and every thing which can strengthen it, and can enable it to act together as a body, and abandons all those who are entitled to its protection, but add to its weight and impede its progress, it must be able to march by roads through which it cannot be followed, with any prospect

of being overtaken, by an army which has not made the same sacrifices."*

Soult moved in succession, without being interrupted, upon Guimaraens, where he was rejoined by Loison; upon Braga, which he traversed twelve hours before Wellesley; upon Mont Allegre and upon Orense. When, with 18,000 men only, he reached the latter town on the 19th, he retained neither artillery nor provisions, nor stores, nor baggage, nor military chest; his soldiers were worn down with fatigue and suffering; the greater number were in want both of clothing and of shoes, and some were destitute even of muskets. His loss amounted to 6000 men, of whom one-half had died in the hospitals, and to fifty-eight pieces of artillery, the greater part of which fell into the hands of the enemy. Yet, when we look to all the difficulties under which this retreat was conducted; when we remember the treachery of some officers, the ill-will of many more, and the general discontent of the troops; when we call to mind that food, clothing, and shoes were wanting; and that men so equipped marched over roads in a frightful state, without bridges or other means of crossing swollen torrents; above all, when we consider that they passed through a hostile population, which mutilated in the most shocking manner stragglers, sick, and wounded; that the rain fell in torrents, and the wind blew furiously, and that their ammunition itself was wetted through; taking all these circumstances into account, it must be admitted, that Soult's reputation was not compromised by a disaster which, however, proved more intolerable to French vanity,

* Letter to Lord Castlereagh, 18th of May, 1809.

than the capitulation of Cintra itself. No doubt the Duke of Dalmatia committed a grave error in allowing himself to be surprised; but apart from that mistake, he exhibited remarkable energy, coolness, and even ability. M. Thiers is unjust in saying that "the marshal might have made a better retreat;" and Napoleon did him equal wrong, when, in the first paroxysm of anger, he declared his determination to bring him to trial. As he was then at Schönbrunn, it was impossible for the Emperor to understand the extent of the embarrassments by which the army of Portugal was beset. But no great while elapsed ere he took a more correct view of the case; of which the consequence was, that he restored to the marshal his entire confidence.

The short campaign of the Douro produced results which were highly honourable to the military talents of Wellesley. In twenty-eight days he had restored order and confidence in Portugal, prepared adequate means of defence against Victor, traversed seventy leagues of mountain-country, effected in the most brilliant manner the passage of the Douro, and forced his enemy to take refuge in Lugo, without artillery and without baggage; and altogether in a worse condition than that in which, six months previously, Sir John Moore found himself when passing through the same town.

Having ascertained, on the 19th, that Lapisse had forced the passage of the bridge of Alcantara and defeated Mayne, Wellesley abandoned the mountains of Chaves, that he might retrace his steps to the Tagus, and follow up the principal object of the campaign, by crushing Victor before Joseph should be able to join him.

The indolence of the Duke of Belluno favoured this

project, though serious embarrassments of another kind rendered its execution difficult. The extraordinary fatigue of a long march had sent upwards of 4000 men to the hospital; provisions of all sorts began to fail; the soldiers were walking almost barefoot; their pay had been long in arrear, and the military chest was empty. These evils were still more aggravated by want of discipline among the men, and by the fatal habits of plundering which they had contracted. Wellesley spared neither reproaches nor humiliations in order to restrain them. "The army," he writes to Lord Castlereagh, "behave terribly ill. They are a rabble who cannot bear success any more than Sir John Moore's army could bear failure. I am endeavouring to tame them; but if I should not succeed, I must make an official complaint of them, and send one or two corps home in disgrace. They plunder in all directions."* This detestable conduct could not fail of exasperating the inhabitants of Portugal and provoking terrible reprisals. It occasioned great embarrassment to the commander-in-chief, who had, besides, reason to complain of the Spanish generals; for their provoking character rendered concert in operations impossible, and interrupted the execution of the simplest and most useful measures. Hence, after the expedition against Soult, Cuesta exhibited such an obstinate adherence to his own notions, that Wellesley lost the opportunity of cutting off Victor from Madrid by turning his position at Torre Mocha.

While these things were in progress, it was ascertained at the English head-quarters that Soult, whose army was supposed to be in no state to keep the field, had

* Letter to Lord Castlereagh, May 31, 1809.

evacuated Galicia, and, arrived at Zamora, to succour Madrid and to support the first corps threatened by the movement of the English towards the Tagus. This circumstance compelled Wellesley to direct the Portuguese army commanded by Beresford upon Almeida, where they would be able to hold the enemy in check. The army of the Duke del Parque and a part of that of Romana occupied, meanwhile, Ciudad Rodrigo, and the force concentrated round these two places amounted to about 25,000 men. Nevertheless, the want of money, sickness, the ill humour of Cuesta, the temporary inefficiency of the English troops, the delay in sending reinforcements, and other difficulties, detained Wellesley in the neighbourhood of Abrantes up to the end of June. At this period it was ascertained that Victor had retired from Torre Mocha, and that 8000 English troops were in sight of Lisbon. Judging the moment favourable, Wellesley put himself in march along both banks of the Tagus, with a view to join Cuesta, and concert with him a plan of operations against Madrid. His force amounted to about 22,000 men: Cuesta had 33,000. This was little enough, no doubt, for taking the initiative against the French, who at that moment had about 250,000 combatants in the Peninsula; but out of that number they could not immediately oppose to the Allies more than 28,000 under Victor, 12,000 under Sebastiani, and the garrison of Madrid, 5000 strong, under the orders of the king.

Wellesley was in no degree blind to the dangers of his situation, against which he had vainly endeavoured to strengthen himself by applying for reinforcements. Instead of attending to his just demands, and sending, as he was quite able to do, 80,000 English into Por-

tugal, the minister persisted in employing his best troops in secondary expeditions, from which he could derive neither profit nor honour. It was not, therefore, in any degree owing to his perseverance or firmness, that the successful issue of the war in Spain is to be attributed; indeed, the sequel of events will prove that the result was due entirely to the military genius of Wellington, and to the endurance and bravery of the Anglo-Portuguese troops.

So early as the month of June, Soult had proposed to Joseph to lay siege to Ciudad Rodrigo, with a view to withdraw Sir Arthur Wellesley from the valley of the Tagus, and thus to open to the army of the centre the road to Lisbon. The proposal was very creditable to the sagacity of him who made it, but the king considered it more important to protect Madrid against Venegas and Cuesta; and that mistake provoked the offensive movement, on the part of the English army, of which we shall now proceed to give an account.

On the 30th of June, Soult received at Zamora a letter dated Schönbrunn (June 12th), in which Napoleon committed to him the guidance of the second, fifth, and sixth corps, with orders to concentrate them for a decisive movement against the English. "Wellesley," wrote the Emperor, "will probably advance by the Tagus against Madrid; in this case, pass the mountains, fall upon his flank and rear, and destroy him."

In consequence of these instructions, the Duke of Dalmatia made up his mind to watch Beresford and Del Parque, to press the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and to direct the remainder of his force upon Placencia, in order to threaten the communication of the English army with Lisbon.

Meanwhile, Wellesley had to choose between three plans of operations. First, he might pass the Tagus, join Cuesta, and basing himself upon Elvas and Badajos, attack Victor. Secondly, he might operate by the line of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, supported by Beresford, the Duke Del Parque, and Romana, while Cuesta and Venegas kept the first and fourth corps in check; and, thirdly, he might advance, with Cuesta, by Placencia and Almaraz, upon Madrid, Venegas co-operating with him from the side of La Mancha.

The English general, with great sagacity, preferred the last of these plans, the many advantages of which he explained in his instructions of the 9th of June to Lieut.-Colonel Burke. Accordingly, after taking every necessary precaution, the Anglo-Portuguese army, in the course of the 8th of July, established its head-quarters at Placencia. Thus Spain became invaded at the very moment when the king thought of acting on the offensive against the English in Portugal.

Victor was at Talavera with 22,000 men; Cuesta occupied Almaraz with 40,000, of whom 7000 were cavalry; and upon the left flank of the straight and long valley of the Tagus, where the English army was about to operate, the united corps of Ney and Soult had established themselves.

Though ignorant of the junction of these latter corps, and of the danger which menaced his line of operations, Wellesley urged Cuesta to guard the defiles of Banos and Perales, the only roads practicable for artillery by which Soult could debouch upon his flank. A very proper precaution, which, however, became unfortunately useless through the wrong-headedness and ill-will of the Spanish general.

On the 20th, the English army effected its junction with Cuesta at Oropeza. It was arranged between the two generals that they should march together upon Madrid, Venegas moving simultaneously upon the same point by Toledo and Aranjuez, with 26,000 men. Meanwhile Colonel Wilson, with his corps of partisans, about 4000 strong, received instructions to advance in the direction of the Escurial and Naval-Carnero, in order to threaten Joseph's communications with the north of Spain; and, finally, 15,000 Portuguese, under the command of Beresford, were directed to give occupation to the French upon the Douro and at Salamanca, in concert with the Duke Del Parque, who was at the head of 12,000 in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo. "This operation," says General Jomini, "was ably conceived, yet its success would have been more certain if it had been carried into execution in the end of June. Wellesley, however, did not command the Spaniards, and was obliged to concert his movements with two generals and a junta, which was not the work of a day." The celebrated critic might have added, that the ignorance and presumption of Cuesta gave more trouble to the chief of the English army than all the hazards of the enterprise in which he had embarked; and that Venegas, failing to carry into effect the part of the plan which had been committed to him, allowed the French to concentrate, in the course of the 24th, 25th, and 26th, all their forces between Torrejos and Toledo. On the other hand, the junta and the English plenipotentiary took no steps to furnish either provisions or means of transport. Wellesley, no doubt, might have guarded against the effects of this inattention. But how could he imagine that he was to receive no support from the

people whom he came to succour,—indeed, that the Spaniards would hide their provisions, and carry their unfriendly feelings so far as to refuse to bury the dead and the carcasses of animals, the effluvia from which were engendering grievous sickness?

On the 22nd of July, Wellesley entered Talavera. He was anxious to attack the French next day, knowing, that as yet they were not concentrated, and that the Duke of Belluno could oppose to him only 22,000 combatants. But Gregorio di Cuesta declared that he was not ready. The consequence was, that Victor was able to retire at his leisure behind the Alberche, and from that upon Toledo, a strategic point of great importance. Count Toreno attributes Cuesta's opposition to excess of prudence; an extraordinary motive in a man of his temperament. But Napier and Londonderry affirm that the only reason why the Spanish general declined to attack on the 23rd, was, that it happened to be Sunday. Be this as it may, that first difference of opinion between the two generals brought about one of the most disastrous events in the campaign.

Having been informed on the 23rd, of the concentration of the allied troops, and of their march upon Talavera, Joseph adopted the wise determination of moving forward to meet them with all his disposable strength, viz. with the corps of Sebastiani and Victor, and with 5000 men withdrawn from Madrid. The sum total of these troops amounted to 50,000 combatants. They ought to have numbered from 68,000 to 70,000, and would have done so, but that Mortier's corps, which by order of the king had been established at Villa-Castin, two marches from Toledo, moved off to Salamanca. The

movement had been opposed by Joseph, but insisted upon by Soult, who appealed, in confirmation of his views, to an order issued by Napoleon, at a distance of 600 leagues from the theatre of war, and three months previously to the events which were about to happen. The king thought at one time to repair the misfortune by pushing the Duke of Dalmatia upon Avila, that he might thence descend the course of the Tagus, between Madrid and Talavera. But apprehensive lest the movement might occupy too much time, he preferred that Soult should debouch directly from Salamanca upon Placencia, where he ought to have arrived on the 30th or 31st of July. This plan, which involved the serious defect, that it separated the French army into two masses, and gave to Wellesley the advantage of the interior line, was severely criticised by Napoleon in a letter which he caused his Minister of War to address to Marshal Jourdan. Yet it is right to observe, that each of these separate masses was strong enough by itself to destroy the whole of the allied army. The real reason, however, which decided the king, and his best excuse for the plan actually adopted, was that which Marshal Jourdan explained in his letter of the 15th of September, to the minister Clarke. "The king calculated," says he, "that the three corps of Soult could arrive in four days at Placencia, while seven or eight would be necessary to reach Madrid, during which time Wellesley and Cuesta, having formed their junction with Venegas, would find themselves cut off from the capital."

So early as the 24th Marshal Soult had received orders to march upon Placencia. Nevertheless, the fifth corps did not quit Salamanca till the 27th, the second till the 30th, and the sixth till the 1st of August.

The Duke of Dalmatia justifies this delay by stating, that his gun-carriages stood in need of repair. Admitting the reasonableness of this excuse, there is yet another delay for which he does not satisfactorily account, viz. the tardy arrival of the three corps in the valley of the Tagus. For though the distance between Salamanca and Placencia scarcely amounts to twenty-five leagues, these corps were not united between Placencia and Naval-Moral till the 5th of August.

Under such circumstances, it was the business of the king to endeavour to gain time. "I am very anxious," writes the Duke of Dalmatia, "that your Majesty should not fight a general action till you find that all my forces are concentrated near Placencia. We shall obtain the most important results if your Majesty will defer your attack till the knowledge of my march obliges the enemy to retire, which he must do or he is lost."

Instead of following this advice, the king listened to the suggestions of Jourdan and Victor, and determined at once to assume the offensive. During the 25th, all his disposable troops were assembled at Vargas, near Toledo. It was there, as it appears, that he received a letter from Soult, announcing that Mortier's corps and his own would be able to leave Salamanca on the 26th; and be, in consequence, on the 30th or 31st, in rear of the English. This intelligence, which the event did not confirm, exercised great influence over the determinations of the king.

To the 50,000 men commanded by Victor, Wellesley could oppose only troops inferior in quality, scarcely equal in point of numbers, and divided by Cuesta's blunders into four unequal masses, without any bond of

union to connect them. Three-fourths of these troops were shut up between the Alberche and the Tagus, and the whole army found itself in a complete state of destitution. There was, therefore, nothing to hinder Joseph from awaiting the arrival of Soult. But the compulsory tardiness of Wellesley had given him a false impression of the character and talents of that general, and decided him to take the unfortunate resolution of passing the Guadarama on the 26th of July. Meanwhile Cuesta, who had hesitated to attack the French on the 23rd, ill-advised, and acted upon by the ambition of being the first to enter Madrid, advanced alone, and proceeded, on the 25th, as far as Santa Olalla and Torrejos. Next day he encountered, with a part of his troops, Victor's advanced guard, which attacked him at Alcabon, and completely defeated him. "If at that moment," says M. Thiers, "the first corps had been in a condition to act, the Spanish army would have been entirely routed; but the soldiers were fatigued, the ground presented serious difficulties, and Victor was unwilling to risk a fresh battle." "The Allies owed everything to Victor's exceeding caution; for their corps were so little in unison, that one vigorous attack might have destroyed them all."* At last, on the 27th, Cuesta consented to fall back upon Talavera, and place himself under the orders of Wellesley. The two armies, when united, could muster about 44,000 bayonets, nearly 10,000 cavalry, and 100 pieces of artillery, but out of this effective force the English and Germans did not exceed 19,000 men.

The Allies took up a tolerably favourable position in

* Napier.

front of Talavera. The right, held by Spanish troops, was covered by olive groves, slight eminences, and ditches. The English on the left, stood upon an open plain, commanded by a height, on which, as in second line, Hill's division took post. Between that height and a chain of mountains bordering the valley of the Tagus, there was a gorge which Wellesley neglected to occupy, believing that it was sufficiently defended by Hill's troops. In front of the centre stretched a plateau on which a redoubt had been begun. Finally, in the open space behind this work, were drawn up Campbell's division, a brigade of dragoons under General Cotton, and a part of the Spanish cavalry. This position, of which the right rested upon Talavera and the left upon the mountain, presented a front of rather more than two miles in extent.

The French drew near, on the 27th, with 43,000 infantry, 7000 cavalry, and 90 pieces of cannon. A part of the English army occupied at that time the post of Casa de Salinas. But the woods by which it could be approached were badly guarded, and the divisions of Lapisse and Ruffin succeeded in surprising the Casa, and putting to the rout two English regiments which had never before been under fire. During that sharp attack, Wellesley narrowly escaped being made prisoner; and at the same moment, the Spaniards on the right, being threatened by Milhaud's light cavalry, dispersed after discharging their pieces. They fled, with their artillery, many miles to the rear, spreading the news that all was lost. Victor would have pursued and sabred them, had not the nature of the ground, and the support of the English cavalry prevented it. Not more than 4000 of the fugitives rallied at Talavera; the rest,

about 6000 in number, appeared no more on the field of battle.

After carrying the Casa, the divisions of Ruffin and Lapisse directed their attack upon the high ground which was occupied by Hill. The Duke de Belluno, encouraged by the success of his first efforts, sent a fresh division of infantry, his cavalry, and light artillery to support them. But Wellesley, followed by his veterans, flew to the spot, restored order, and covered the retreat of the advanced posts upon the main body. The same day, Victor made a fresh attempt to carry the height which was the key of the allied position, and a fierce struggle was continued at that point after darkness had set in. "While the action went on," says Napier, "there might be seen by the light of their own flashes lines of infantry which, with rare intrepidity, fired upon each other thirty paces apart." For a moment the issue of the combat appeared doubtful. But by and by could be heard above the noise of battle the shout of the English announcing that the enemy was again driven back into the ravine.

Instead of undertaking these two combats with inadequate means, Victor, if he had been prudent, would have reserved his strength for a general attack which he might have delivered on the 27th. By putting off the decisive effort till the next day, he gave Wellesley the opportunity to prolong his left flank across the valley, and put thereby the high ground beyond in a far better state of defence. This latter was attacked for the third time on the morning of the 28th, but, in spite of the ardour of the French troops, with no better success than on previous occasions.

We must now turn our attention for a moment to

Soult, who, in a letter which reached head-quarters on the morning of the 28th, had informed the king that his army would not be assembled at Placencia till the 3rd or 5th of August. Notwithstanding this information and the opinion of Jourdan that Wellesley's position was unassailable in front, the king determined to deliver battle. He himself declares that he yielded under these circumstances to the persuasions of Victor, who pledged himself to carry the height from which he had twice been driven, and added that, if he should fail, it would be necessary to give up making war altogether. Joseph besides imagined that if he declined the battle which was offered to him, the Duke of Belluno would by and by accuse him of having lost an excellent opportunity of destroying the English army and restoring peace to Spain. Now, the dread of appearing weak and timid in the eyes of his brother, who was constantly reproaching him with want of energy, exercised quite as much influence over the mind of the king, as a not ill-founded apprehension respecting the fate of Madrid, which, besides being in danger from the excited state of the inhabitants, was threatened from without both by the army of Venegas and by Wilson's corps. These were the reasons, secondary in point of fact, but carrying great weight with the king, which induced him not to wait for the arrival of Soult, of whom, besides, it might fairly be said, that he had deranged by his delays the whole plan of the campaign.

The combat of the morning being ended, the hostile armies made ready for what both regarded as a decisive struggle. Both, but especially the Allies, found themselves beset with difficulties. The English soldiers were dying of hunger. For some days regular issues

had ceased, and these men, at once fatigued with yesterday's fighting, and on the point of entering upon a new battle, had received nothing for their subsistence but a few ounces of flour. In the Spanish camp, the greatest confusion prevailed. Finally, Cuesta, in order to disguise his incapacity, exhibited excessive harshness, which terrified his troops and deprived him entirely of their confidence.

It was at this very critical moment, when the French were moving on to the attack, that Albuquerque sent a staff officer to Wellesley, to warn him that his Spanish colleague was playing the traitor. This message, astounding in no common degree, was delivered to Colonel Donkin, who hurried off in search of the commander-in-chief to the crest of the hill, on which for two days the fighting had been most severe. Sir Arthur was watching from that point the movements of the French army. He received Albuquerque's letter, read it, and quietly said, "Very well, colonel, you may go back to your brigade;" and then, without adding a single word, continued his reconnaisance. He who at such a moment could receive a communication so grave with perfect serenity, and even contempt, must have been fully master of himself, or been endowed by nature with marvellous strength of character! It was, however, well for him that Albuquerque's anticipations were not realised, and that Cuesta's army, if it rendered little service, did not cover itself with disgrace by betraying the cause of its country.

From nine to twelve o'clock, no hostile movements were made. On both sides men lay down, as if waiting for the battle; and the heat being excessive, the soldiers of the two armies quitted their

ranks and mixed together, without menace or anger, to quench their thirst at a little stream which separated their respective positions. At one o'clock, the scene changed entirely — the French gathered about their colours, the drums beat, the eagles were displayed, the columns formed up and put themselves in motion. At two the first musket shots were fired, and the battle began.

The French troops, full of ardour, appeared to be marching to certain victory; but, instead of forcing, by a well sustained attack, the left of the English, which was their weak point, the Duke of Belluno directed his principal effort against Campbell, upon their right. At the moment when Sebastiani began to advance upon that point, the attack upon the centre, directed by Lapisse, and that against the left, commanded by Ruffin and Villatte, were going on with very unequal prospects. The latter column, by far too weak to carry the height and turn the English left, did not gain an inch of ground; the former, supported by a powerful battery, succeeded in breaking the English centre, but paid for this momentary triumph by the death of its intrepid chief. Yet the moment was critical, indeed the day seemed won, when the 48th of the line, led on by Wellington himself, descended from the high ground which it had previously occupied, advanced through the broken masses, arrested the impulse of the French, and protected the rally of a part of Sherbrooke's division, in rear of the menaced point. Time was thus given for the arrival of a brigade of light cavalry, which Wellesley launched upon the French columns, just as they were beginning to stagger under the fire of the artillery. This brilliant charge decided the victory.

It is a matter of surprise that Victor should have

BATTLE OF TALAVERA.

28th July 1809.

made no effort to restore the battle, by supporting Lapisse and Sebastiani with one of the king's brigades, and with the reserve, which had not yet been engaged. The moment, indeed, was favourable for such a move, for Ruffin was on the point of penetrating through the valley, whence he could have fallen upon the rear of the English, whilst Villatte attacked them in front; whereas Wellesley had nothing to oppose to these attempts except 14,000 English and Germans, exhausted with hunger and fatigue. As to the Spaniards, they would have become, at the critical moment, a cause of embarrassment rather than of actual strength. Such were still the chances for the French army, when the King, contrary to the advice of the Duke of Belluno, gave the order to retreat. But of that order Jourdan, who had opposed the idea of giving battle at all, heartily approved, either because he considered the army as unable to continue the struggle any longer, or because, like Joseph, he was afraid of being turned by Venegas, whose troops were beginning to show themselves in the neighbourhood of Madrid.

Hostilities ceased about six o'clock, and the two armies took up again their positions of the morning. The victory of the Allies would have been perfect if, at the moment when Sebastiani began to fall back, the Spanish troops had made an offensive movement against the flank of his corps by marching rapidly on the Alberche. But it was found quite impossible to manœuvre them in the presence of the enemy.

The loss of the English, at Talavera, amounted to 6268 men; that of the French to 7396, and the latter left, besides, seventeen pieces of cannon on the field of battle. But the saddest incident of all was occasioned

by the falling of expended cartridge-papers upon the long dry grass and brushwood, with which the plain was covered. Both took fire, and blazed with such fury, that towards evening some hundreds of wounded men, unable to crawl away, were burned to death, or cruelly scorched where they lay. "This battle," says General Jomini, "restored to the successors of Marlborough the glory which for a whole age seemed to have passed from them. It established the fact that the English infantry was fit to contend, on equal terms, with the best in Europe." For the truth is, that barely 16,000, of whom a large proportion had just been drafted from the militia, succeeded, on the day of Talavera, in repelling the attack of 30,000 French veterans, and gave, by that feat of arms, a brilliant contradiction to those who pretend that the English are steady only when they are well fed and brought fresh into the field. It is worthy of remark, also, that Napoleon, from that hour, modified in his correspondence the opinion which he had heretofore expressed, concerning the valour of the English troops, and the capacity of their generals.

Monsieur Thiers, the author of the "Victories and Conquests," and Belmas, the compiler of the "Memoirs of Joseph," have exhibited little impartiality, in representing the battle to have been indecisive. Napoleon, with greater frankness, in a letter to his brother, describes the affair of Talavera as a lost battle, and he speaks the truth. At the same time it must be admitted that the historian of the Consulate and the Empire has at least fair ground for assuming that but for the blunders of Victor and the indecision of Joseph, who, for the first time in his life, found himself that day in

a field of battle, the results would have been very different.

During the whole of the day the two armies remained in presence of each other. But on the 30th, Joseph, having learnt that Wilson's partisans were threatening the capital, where three battalions only were in garrison, fell back with part of the army, placing Victor upon the Alberche, to crush the enemy's rear-guard so soon as Soult should have forced them to retreat. Meanwhile there arrived in the English lines, under the command of General Crawfurd, 3000 fresh troops, whom the sound of the cannonade had directed in all haste upon Talavera. [It was the famous light division, which, in the course of twenty-six hours, had compassed sixty-two miles of march; and which, though each soldier carried a load of fifty or sixty pounds upon his back, reached Talavera on the 29th, leaving only seventeen stragglers behind.] Still, though well pleased to receive such an accession to his force, Wellesley refused to act on the offensive. He regarded the French rather as repulsed than beaten, and had no confidence whatever in the discipline and fidelity of the Spanish. Besides, he had just received intelligence of the armistice of Znaim, of which an announcement was made in the Madrid Gazette; and the march of Soult was made known to him. But being alike unwilling to offend the self-love of his allies and to awaken their fears, he kept these considerations to himself, and assigned as his only reason for remaining inactive, that he was without provisions, and destitute of the means of transport.

In the evening of the 2nd of August, Wellesley ascertained that he had nothing to expect from Venegas;

that the defile of Banos, which the Marquis Del Reim had undertaken to hold with four battalions, was abandoned without firing a shot, and that Soult's advanced-guard was already in the neighbourhood of Placencia. As these latter reports led him to believe that the force at the Marshal's disposal did not exceed from twelve to fifteen thousand men, he was imprudent enough, on the morning of the 3rd, to march alone, for the purpose of meeting him; the Spanish army being left at Talavera, to make head against the French, in the event of Victor renewing his attempts from that side. It was a false move which ought to have compromised every thing; for when Wellesley, in the evening of the 3rd, arrived at Oropesa, with only 17,000 men, the Duke of Dalmatia was beginning to make his appearance at Naval Moral, in the valley of the Tagus. Thus 47,000 Allies, of which the actual strength did not exceed 20,000 good troops, found themselves between two armies, one amounting to 50,000, the other to 35,000 men.

This state of affairs created general uneasiness, but Wellesley retained his self-possession. Measuring the danger with the coolness and rapid glance of a great commander, he took on the instant the only resolution which could avail to save the English army, that of retracing his steps, of passing the Tagus at Arzobispo, and of gaining, by and by, the Estremadura road, by descending, along paths, well-nigh impracticable, the left bank of the river, as far as Almaraz. To bring this plan to bear, however, it would be necessary to prevent Soult from seizing the bridge of boats at Almaraz, and so cutting off their line of retreat from the English army. For already Mortier was on the move to accomplish

that object; but Wellesley opposed to him Crawfurd, who, taking the mountain roads and transporting his artillery by strength of hand, was fortunate enough to gain Almaraz before the French division, to break down the bridge of boats, and to guard the passage of the ford below the town.

Meanwhile Cuesta discovered in the course of the 3rd, by intercepted letters from the king to Jourdan, the real state of Soult's force, the chances of his speedy junction with Ney, who was debouching from Castille, and the offensive movement projected by Joseph in co-operation with these two marshals. He quitted Talavera on the following night, and marched upon the steps of Wellesley, whom he overtook at an early hour on the 4th, in the neighbourhood of Oropesa. The same day the English army moved upon Arzobispo, where it crossed the river with such celerity as to be in a condition to pursue its march at an early hour next morning. If Cuesta had quitted Oropesa in good time, he might have effected the passage immediately afterwards. But the same spirit of opposition which had animated him at Talavera overmastered him here; and insisting that Oropesa offered an excellent position on which to give battle, he refused to follow the English. No sooner, however, had the French begun to show themselves on the morrow than he discovered his mistake. He passed the Tagus, and transferred his head-quarters to Paraleda de Garbin, leaving at Arzobispo two divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, under the orders of Albuquerque. That rear guard was surprised on the 8th by Mortier, who put it to the rout, and took thirty pieces of cannon. Indeed, if the French had followed up their success with the vigour which usually

characterised them, they would have probably destroyed the whole of the Spanish army.

During the 7th, 8th, and 9th, the English reassembled at Deleytosa, where they were officially apprised by a despatch from Lord Wellesley, dated at Seville, of the disasters of the Austrian army. "That intelligence," says an eye-witness, "produced great despondency in the English army, and caused men to doubt whether successful resistance to Napoleon was any longer possible." "But Sir Arthur," adds Lord Londonderry, "was far from despairing. He had already declared his conviction, that even in the event of Spain's subversion, Portugal could be defended." And into Portugal he prepared to move.

In the course of the 11th the allied head-quarters were transferred to Jaraicejo. Next day Cuesta resigned his command, and the Spanish army passed under the orders of General Eguia, who, on the 13th, established his head-quarters at Deleytosa. Thus, thanks to the hindrances thrown in the way of the French army by the destruction of the bridges of Almaraz and Arzobispo, the Allies succeeded in occupying, on the 11th, a good line of defence. The English guarded the ford of Almaraz on the left; the Spaniards the important pass of Meza del Ebor, upon the right.*

In this position the army remained nine days, nor did it resume its march upon Truxillo and Merida† till

* The ford at Almaraz could have been of no use to the French, had they been masters of it, so long as the defiles of Mirabete and Meza del Ebor were in possession of the Allies. Any force crossing there would have been shut up between the river and the precipitous mountains of Mirabete.

† In order to move his artillery and baggage across the mountain

Wellesley had satisfied himself that the French entertained no design of invading Portugal. Had they pursued this course, his intention was to follow them in every movement which they might make towards Lisbon.* He might have even continued to operate in Spain, had not the want of provisions and means of transport compelled him to withdraw from it; and had he not been convinced to his cost that no effectual support was to be expected from a people so careless as to look on with indifference, while the brave men who fought for them gratuitously, and offered to pay for every thing with which they might be supplied, were perishing of want. "The Spaniards," he writes to Marshal Beresford, 8th of August, 1809, "cannot be depended upon for any operation of any description; and they want means of all kinds."

On the 3rd of September, Wellesley removed his headquarters to Badajoz,—an excellent position, whence he could cover, at the same time, Portugal and the south of

of Guadalupe, Wellesley was obliged to construct a road. A large portion of the army, and all the peasantry in the neighbourhood, were employed on this work.

* Wellesley stated (see Parliamentary Papers), that if the French had moved on Lisbon, he would have recrossed the Tagus, forced a junction with Beresford, who was at Moralejo, and attacked the right of the French army. It would have been a bold and hazardous enterprise,—for his own army had become greatly demoralised and disheartened. Indeed, in a letter to his brother, the English Minister at Cadiz, 8th of August, he says: "A starving army is actually worse than none. The soldiers lose their discipline and their spirit; they plunder even in the presence of their officers; the officers are discontented, and are almost as bad as the men; and with an army which, a fortnight ago, beat double their numbers, I should now hesitate to meet a French corps of half their strength."

Spain. There is no room to doubt, that if Ney had succeeded in carrying the ford at Almaraz, Soult's corps might have completed the ruin of the English army, and forced Wellesley to a far more disastrous retreat. This, however, was not attempted; while Joseph at once removed the danger by sending off the first corps (Belluno) to support the fourth (Sebastiani), already opposed to Venegas; the fifth (Mortier) to Oropesa, to observe the Tagus between Almaraz and Toledo; the second (Soult) to Placencia, to watch the debouches out of Portugal; and the sixth (Ney) to Salamanca, to disperse the Duke del Parques' bands, which infested Old Castille.

The blame cast upon Joseph, in this conjuncture, is perfectly just. He failed to take advantage of the momentary concentration of 85,000 men in the valley of the Tagus, which might have enabled him to destroy Wellesley's weak army, or at all events to cut off its retreat upon Lisbon. "He ought," says Jomini, "to have left a corps at Toledo, and to have fallen with the other four upon the English wherever he might find them, whether it were at Lisbon or Cadiz." Certainly no better opportunity ever presented itself, during the whole of the Spanish war, for attempting a decisive movement against the Allies. Marshal Soult alone appears to have been alive to the occasion. "His desire," says the king, "was to assemble an army of about 60,000 men, with which at once to invade Portugal; to march upon Lisbon, with a view to drive away the English; to destroy the Portuguese troops; to move next upon Seville; to disperse the junta; overrun Andalusia, and to annihilate the insurrectionary armies of Cuesta, Venegas, and the rest." Doubtless this would have been a magnificent result; but to bring it

about two requirements were wanting, neither of which seems to have been easily attainable. First, there was the absence of supplies of every kind, which the country could not furnish; next, the troops must have been kept in the field throughout the hot season, an arrangement which Napoleon himself had admitted to be impossible.

We do not mean to deny to this argument the force to which it is entitled; but we are inclined to believe that it would have weighed very little with the Emperor himself. Had he been present in person, it is probable that neither the exhaustion of the troops nor the dilapidated condition of the *matériel* would have arrested his progress; that the English army would have suffered annihilation, and Spain been conquered anew. But Joseph was a general of moderate capacity, whom the fear of exposing Madrid, or of compromising the fate of a province, could divert at any moment from aiming at decisive advantages which men of genius might have achieved. Besides, Marshal Ney advised the suspension of hostilities in Estremadura; and Joseph acted on the suggestion with the greater readiness, because he remembered how Napoleon, in a letter of the 29th of July, dated from Schönbrunn, had charged him not to engage in any important operations till the reinforcements which he was preparing to send from the heart of Germany should arrive in Spain. Finally, the Armistice of Znaim afforded every reason to believe that these reinforcements would soon make their appearance. Why, then, precipitate events unnecessarily?

Wellesley's plans, on the other hand, looking to the resources at his disposal, and to the amount of information of which he was possessed, had all been ar-

ranged with consummate wisdom. We have no right to criticise them as if he had been free to make Cadiz his *place d'armes* (though it is unquestionably true that the proper strategic line against Madrid crosses La Mancha, and that the southern provinces of Spain are more fertile in resources than Portugal), or, as if he had been aware of the unsatisfactory condition of the Spanish troops, the incapacity of their generals — the wrong-headedness of Cuesta — the unfriendly disposition of the Central Junta, the want of forethought in its agents — the egotistical and vindictive character of the Spaniard — and, above all, of the real amount of troops with which Soult was in a condition to fall upon his left. When he opened the campaign, he was ignorant, and, in some degree, necessarily ignorant, of all these circumstances. The single error, therefore, which can be laid to his charge is this, that he trusted to Spanish soldiers, instead of himself providing for the defence of the Puerto de Banos, on which, according to his own confession, depended the success of his operations and the safety of his army.

M. Thiers has reason on his side when he defends Wellesley against those who maintain that taking advantage of the separation of the French army into two masses, he ought to have destroyed them in detail. With respect to the anxiety displayed by the same writer to exculpate Jourdan from the censure of Napoleon, for having moved Soult upon Placencia, we are bound to remark that the movement in question was suggested by the Duke of Dalmatia, and acceded to by Jourdan with reluctance; that it was, besides, according to every principle of the art of war, an undoubted fault; and that the king, if he really approved of it, fearing all

the while that he might be opposed single-handed to the attacks of Wellesley, Cuesta, and Venegas, before Soult could arrive (the distance to Madrid being greater than to Placencia by three or four days' march), committed a great blunder in directing Mortier to move from Villa Caston to Salamanca. Still, in spite of this mistake, the most serious in the campaign, it is probable that the king's plan would have succeeded to the extent of his wishes, if Soult had marched with greater celerity, and there had been a better understanding and more unity of purpose among the commanders of the French corps.

It was at this period that the Central Junta nominated Wellesley to the chief command of the Spanish Armies, and that the English Government raised him to the peerage as Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera.

Though the campaign, as far as its proposed object was concerned, must be admitted to have been a failure, Lord Wellington could still congratulate himself on having well handled his troops. It was a result as important in its influence upon public opinion, as it was honourable to the individual who brought it about, for it contrasted forcibly with the issues of the most gigantic maritime operation that had as yet been undertaken in Europe; we allude to the ill-fated expedition to Walcheren.

"With a handful of men, and a good general," says M. Thiers, "the English made head in Spain against the best troops in the world. In Flanders, with excellent troops, destitute of a leader, they were worsted by the recruits who formed the garrison of Antwerp. Three hundred thousand veteran troops, the best of

which France could ever boast, and of which two hundred thousand at least were disposable for battle, offered the strongest assurance that in July the French eagles would float over Lisbon, over Seville, over Cadiz, over Valencia; yet when July came, they were not at Lisbon, nor even at Oporto, but at Astorga; — they were not at Cadiz, nor at Seville, but at Madrid; they were not at Valencia, but at Saragossa."

The expedition to Madrid encountered the same obstacles which had baffled the offensive movement of Sir John Moore, viz., the ignorance and wrongheadedness of the Spanish generals; the necessity of arranging with them every trifling movement; the worthlessness of their troops; the blind hostility of the juntas; the apathy of the Spanish people; their insane hatred of the Portuguese, and their unsatisfactory disposition towards the English soldiers, with whom they were never on good terms. At Talavera the inhabitants concealed their provisions, which would have supplied the wants of the army for a month. They permitted the gallant defenders of their country to die of hunger, and refused to assist them in burying their dead. They even slandered them on the ground of inhumanity to a body of poor wounded Frenchmen, whom they pretended that the English had massacred and mutilated. Wellington complains bitterly of this conduct. "We are worse off here," he says, "than in an enemy's country; the Spaniards make all sorts of promises, and accomplish none; their armies render us no assistance whatever; on the contrary, we are obliged to abandon our stores and empty the military chest, in order to employ the waggons in transporting our wounded and sick. They violate all the laws of humanity, and com-

pel us to leave behind our ammunition, provisions, and money. Every thing must be done by the English army."

Between the 20th July and the 20th August, the commander-in-chief was able to issue to his troops only ten whole rations, though the Spaniards, all the while, had provisions in abundance. The men were weakened by hunger; their sick perished for want of care; the cavalry became, so to speak, unfit for service, and the commissariat was without means of transport. Marshal Beresford had the same difficulties to encounter in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo. "The Spanish authorities," says Southey, "refused to give a single ration to his soldiers; and the magazines, though supplied by the English, were seized by the *Cabildo*, under the pretext that a debt due by Sir John Moore had not yet been paid." To the authorities who attempted to justify this culpable indifference, by pretending that provisions were scarce, Wellington made this well deserved answer: "It is ridiculous to pretend that the country cannot supply our wants. The French army is well supplied; the Spanish army has every thing in abundance; and we alone, on whom every thing depends, are dying of hunger."

Spanish authors are unwilling to admit that there was any unfriendly feeling among their countrymen in the matter referred to by the English general. They attribute all to the weakness of the Central Junta, to the inexperience of its agents, and to the distress of the country.

Now the truth is, that though these circumstances operated only in a very secondary degree, Lord Wellington gave them quite as much importance as they

deserved. In a memorandum drawn up after the close of the campaign, he says:—"I must declare, that this want of all the necessary supplies was not owing to the negligence or carelessness of the late British minister (Mr. Frere), but to the poverty and exhaustion of the country; to the want of activity in the magistrates and people; to the indolence which they displayed on every occasion, except when they found it necessary to take care of themselves, or to escape from the enemy; to their habitual disregard and disobedience to orders; and to the want of all authority in the government and its officials."

It was the dying advice of Sir John Moore to his government, never again to employ an auxiliary force in Spain. Wellington soon learned, to his cost, how wise this counsel had been; and therefore fell back in succession upon Merida, Badajoz, and Lisbon, taking no count of the Spanish generals, who, left to themselves, were forthwith attacked and dispersed. From that time forth, up to the end of the war, Wellington fought for the Spaniards, but never again with them. "I have overcome difficulties enough," he says; "as to those of Spain, I will have nothing more to do with them." And he kept his word. The war became henceforth, so to speak, a struggle between the French and English armies. The Spanish troops, and the cause of the independence of the Peninsula itself, degenerated into secondary objects. Hence the commander-in-chief of the Allies, regarding the question at issue as a European one, made his arrangements so as to be no longer harassed in his movements, deceived in his calculations, or disappointed in his hopes, by the blunders of the native army and government. We shall follow him,

step by step, in this new career, wherein he is hampered by greater difficulties than before, and over which, with rare good fortune, he triumphs, through that admirable perseverance and clear judgment which is more than good sense—which is genius.

The English army suffered much from the pestilential vapours of the Guadiana; nevertheless Wellington thought himself bound to remain as long as possible at Badajoz, that he might afford protection to Andalusia and Estremadura during the political crisis which succeeded the retreat from Talavera. Public opinion loudly blamed the junta for the abortive results of the campaign; and it became the more irresistible, because it was sustained by the discontent of the English, by the authority of the Council of Castille, newly reinstated, and by the recriminations of many of the deputies themselves. A little more would have brought about the forcible overthrow of the government; but, alive to the danger, and not unaware that the views of the English ambassador, though opposed to violence, were in favour of a compact executive;—convinced, besides, that the authorities to whom they owed their own existence, as a deliberative body, entertained, for the most part, similar opinions—the junta established an executive commission for the better transaction of the affairs of government, and fixed the 1st of July, 1810, for the meeting of the extraordinary Cortes.

The crisis being averted by these two measures, the question of acting again on the offensive was reopened. In vain the junta pressed the English general to support the Spanish troops. Wellington had arrived at the conclusion that a war of defence offered the only chances of success, and that the brief period of in-

action into which the enemy had fallen ought to be devoted to the task of organising, equipping, and perfecting the discipline of the allied troops. This wise counsel was despised by the heads of the Spanish Government, who, with as much ignorance as presumption, arranged the most ridiculous as well as the most disastrous expedition upon which the national armies had ever entered.

General Eguia, the successor of Cuesta, who had retreated before Victor and Sebastiani, after declaring that he would make every effort to deliver the country from its oppressors, excited so much discontent at Seville, that he was removed from his command. He was succeeded by Areyzaga, a general of the hour, ignorant of modern strategy, and destitute of talents for command, but greatly thought of ever since the affair of Alcaniz. Placed at the head of the army of Andalusia, 50,000 strong, Areyzaga was directed to form a junction with the troops of Del Parque and Albuquerque at Talavera, and to drive the French from Madrid. "So convinced," says Count Toreno, "was the majority of statesmen of the feasability of the enterprise, or rather so blind were they to its difficulties, that the junta made choice of MM. Jovellanos and Riquelme to arrange the ceremonies which should be observed on the occasion of its triumphal entrance into the capital." Wellington warned the minister and members of the junta, that their plan was ill-conceived, and would inevitably result in the destruction of the Spanish army. But misled by the easy success which had been achieved at Tamames, they made light of this advice, and entered upon the campaign with a confidence of which they soon found reason to repent.

The army of Areyzaga quitted Carolina on the 5th of November; crossed the Sierra Morena with sixty guns, and established itself at Ocana, where, on the 19th, it was attacked and completely beaten by 25,000 French. Marshal Mortier commanded the French infantry on that occasion, and General Sebastiani the cavalry. King Joseph and his major-general arriving on the ground just as the battle began, directed the movements of the whole force. The following are the terms in which Soult describes the brilliant victory: "A Spanish army of 55,000 men was destroyed; all its baggage, all its artillery, with thirty standards have fallen into our hands. The guns taken already amount to fifty. The number of prisoners exceeds 25,000, among whom are three generals, six colonels, and 700 officers. The ground is covered with the dead. Fresh prisoners are brought in every moment. It is believed that the number does not fall short of 30,000. It appears certain that there scarcely remains one battalion out of that army in a state to continue the struggle."

The battle of Ocana, so rashly undertaken, opened the gates of Andalusia to the French, and filled the whole kingdom with terror and despondency. Del Parque's army was not better treated. After having obtained, on the 18th of October, at Tamames, an unlooked-for advantage over Ney's corps, commanded by General Marchand, it had moved upon Salamanca, where it remained inactive till called upon to co-operate in Areyzaga's plan. According to other accounts, it quitted Salamanca solely because Ney's corps had been largely reinforced from Valladolid. Be this as it may, the Duke del Parque, finding himself threatened upon the right by Soult, halted for a few days at Carpio, in the neigh-

bourhood of Medina del Campo, where, on the 23rd of November, he attacked the enemy with success. But instead of profiting by the opportunity to retire at once upon Ciudad Rodrigo, he delayed to put himself in march till the night of the 26th; when intelligence of the disaster of Ocana came in and induced him to precipitate his retreat. It was too late. On the 28th, Kellermann's advanced guard, consisting of only 2000 cavalry without guns, overtook him in his disorderly bivouac, near Alba de Tormès. It fell upon him instantly, sabred 3000 men, and captured fifteen pieces of artillery. Indeed, such was the demoralising effect of the surprise, that on the following day one of his columns, which had arrived within a couple of leagues of Tamames, broke on the appearance of a squadron of dragoons in its rear, and fled in the utmost confusion.

While these things were going on in Old Castille, the junta added to its blunders by directing the Duke del Albuquerque to withdraw with his corps towards the Guadiana, and to abandon, in consequence, Meza del Ebor, as well as the position of Puerto de Mirabete, upon the Tagus. Wellington complained bitterly of the irreparable mischief which these extravagances occasioned to the cause of which he was the main support. "If the Spaniards," says he, "had kept their armies together, all would have been well; the chances were in our favour, and at the first moment of weakness occasioned by a diversion upon the continent, or by the discontent of the French, more and more disgusted with the war, their victorious armies might have been driven out of Spain." That Joseph should have omitted, under such favourable circumstances, to invade Andalusia, for the defence of which there were no troops nearer than

20,000 English, cantonned along the Portuguese frontier, may well excite surprise.

The same sentiment has been expressed in consequence of Wellington's steady refusal to act on the offensive. It was competent to him to connect with his own army about 100,000 Spaniards. The movements of the first and second French corps seemed to present an opportunity of beating the enemy in detail. Why, then, it has been asked, display such morbid timidity?—why decline an operation in some sort identical with that upon which the English army had entered without the slightest hesitation four months previously? The reason is simple enough. Wellington would no longer act on the suggestions of the junta, because he knew the Spaniards better than he had previously done; because he was aware, that in war moral strength is to physical as three to one; and because he had foreseen, as he himself expresses it, "that after one or two brilliant actions and a few defeats, the whole Spanish army would disband itself." A celebrated military critic approves, moreover, of the caution with which Wellington acted throughout. "Excessive as it might be considered, we should be unjust," he says, "were we to speak of it with censure; for, in truth, it mattered little to the duke whether the war should last ten years or only one, so long as he put nothing to the hazard. It was not the soil of England which he permitted to be trodden under foot, and for the safety of which it would have been reasonable to sacrifice everything." *

While these matters were in progress, Mr. Frere had been replaced by the Marquis of Wellesley, a diplomatist

* Jomini.

especially competent to second the views of the commander-in-chief, and to give to public affairs a vigorous impulse. The army, heretofore languidly supported by the agents of Great Britain, rejoiced in this unexpected change, and rested its best hopes upon the powerful intervention of a statesman, whose Indian administration had been attended with such brilliant results. Unfortunately, the Marquis of Wellesley did not remain long enough in the Peninsula to change the face of affairs. Nor is it by any means improbable that even he would have failed in accomplishing his wishes; because the difficulties which beset the progress of events in that country were totally different in their nature from those over which he had so ably triumphed, when at the head of the government of India.

On the 8th of October Lord Wellington proceeded from Badajoz to Lisbon, that he might reconnoitre the positions in front of that city, where he had conceived the idea of establishing a huge intrenched camp. This done, he repaired on the 1st of November to Seville, in order to inaugurate, supported by his brother, a system which should insure to military operations greater unity of purpose than had heretofore marked them. He had scarcely returned to his head-quarters, ere the affair of Ocana took place. Up to that moment, in spite of his great desire to re-enter Portugal, nothing had occurred to withdraw him from the neighbourhood of Badajoz; but he was no sooner made aware of the defeat of the Duke Del Parque, of the critical condition of the important fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo, and of the evacuation, by command of the Central Junta, of Puerto de Mirabete and Meza del Ebor, by the Duke of Albuquerque, than he moved by Albuquerque towards the

north, in order to act in concert with the Spanish troops which defended Rodrigo, and with Beresford, who covered Almeida. "This new plan," says General Jomini, "was not without merit, because it carried the English army upon the most important point in the communications of the French, exposed as they were by the concentration which Joseph had effected on the frontiers of Andalusia." It offered, besides, the great advantage of more effectually covering Portugal, the real basis of all British operations.

The departure of Wellington gave the signal for the invasion of Andalusia. The original idea of this enterprise, for which the king alone has been held responsible, is to be found in the instructions issued to Soult for the expedition into Portugal in 1809. The instructions in question not having been followed up, Napoleon, after the battle of Talavera, gave orders to suspend the invasion till the month of February; but the rout of Ocana had effected such a favourable change in public opinion, and the people appeared so disgusted with the government of the junta, that Joseph applied for permission to act immediately. He submitted two plans of campaign to his brother, who abstained from giving an opinion, without, however, advancing any objection to the expedition itself. It is difficult to account for this circumstance; because, so to scatter the French troops over the whole of Spain was clearly a mistake, especially at a time when the only serious obstacle to the submission of the Peninsula, was the English army, of which the importance increased from day to day.

Followed by the whole of his court, and attended by an amount of luxury and parade which was ridiculous, Joseph put himself at the head of 55,000 men, and, on

the 20th of January, crossed the Sierra Morena. Eleven days afterwards he made himself master of Seville, of which the defence, as well as that of other points, was paralysed at the moment by a furious insurrection against the Central Junta. Thanks to that circumstance, and still more to the incapacity with which the junta directed its military operations, the king overran in three weeks southern Estremadura and Andalusia, with the exception only of Gibraltar and Cadiz. If he had exhibited a little more vigour and diligence, the latter town would have probably been carried by assault; because the French army, marching at its ordinary pace, might have reached the place on the 29th of January, five days earlier than Albuquerque's corps. It did not, however, arrive till the 6th of February, by which time reinforcements had entered the city, of which the consequence was a regular siege; and the employment of troops in that operation which, had they been directed on other points, might have performed the most important services.

"The conquest of Andalusia," says Belmas, "proved to be nothing more, so to speak, than a military promenade. It did not cost the French two hundred men at the most." Neither was Wellington in any measure alarmed by it; indeed, he states in his memorandum of the campaign of 1810, that it gave him no annoyance, because he was satisfied that the enemy would find it impossible to retain a permanent hold upon Andalusia, so long as the English remained masters of Lisbon and of the Tagus. And to this opinion the proceedings of the French generals in November, subsequently to the battle of Ocana, gave great weight. At that time the Spanish armies were so completely broken up, and the

moral effect of the victory was so great, that every facility seemed to be afforded them of overrunning the province, and entering Cadiz itself unopposed. But instead of striking for objects so important, they withdrew the mass of the troops into Old Castile, as if it had been their object to establish there the line of their future operations.

Whatever the motives might be which swayed them on the occasion referred to, the tidings of Joseph's irruption into Andalusia suggested to Wellington a movement similar to that which Moore had effected at Sahagun. If he could break into Castile and threaten the enemy's rear, he would at once bring them back for the defence of Madrid. But the condition of the allied armies was, unfortunately, such as to render success in the undertaking extremely doubtful; and it became the duty of their able leader not to risk it. Besides, at that very moment, Napoleon was preparing to make a new effort to complete the conquest of Portugal.

The effects of the continental blockade upon England had been very disastrous. A decisive blow inflicted on her through Spain might induce her to sign a treaty of peace, and consent to the re-distribution of Europe. "By striking vigorously and promptly," says Monsieur Thiers, "the fate of Europe might have been settled at Lisbon." Nor, indeed, could any thing be more easy. For peace with Austria rendered the army of Germany disposable, and 100,000 men belonging to it were already on their march towards the Peninsula. But the battle of Talavera had produced upon the Emperor the same effect as that of Vimiera. Finding his best troops beaten a second time by the "Hindoo general," he began to experience great anxiety as to the final results.

After the check received by the Duke of Abrantes, he had himself hurried at the head of his guards across the Somo Sierra, and ended the campaign at Madrid. The ceremonials of his marriage, and certain embarrassments arising out of the continental blockade system, hindered him from adopting a similar course on the present occasion. But he selected Massena, whom the campaign of 1809 had raised to the highest rank among his marshals, and sent him, with a more imposing force than had yet taken the field, to finish the war in Spain. It was a judicious choice, for this, among other reasons, that Massena was free from the spirit of rivalry which, to a greater or less degree, prevailed among the rest of the French generals.

With his usual perspicacity, Wellington had foreseen this result. "I am convinced," he writes, on the 7th of June, to Mr. Charles Stuart, "that the French will now regard the necessity of driving us from the Peninsula as the first object to which they ought to attend. They will risk every thing to accomplish it, and will attack us on every side."

At the moment when this new campaign was about to open, the situation of the Allies was by no means encouraging. The French had resumed the offensive at all points; had crushed one after another the whole of the national armies; had compelled their broken masses to take refuge in the most remote districts; had carried several important fortresses; had pacified Andalusia; extinguished popular enthusiasm; and rendered national resistance impossible. The English army, on the other hand, reduced to 30,000 men, of whom 9000 were sick, was obliged to keep upon the defensive; and though it had made noticeable progress, its discipline was by no

means perfect. Drunkenness and pillage compelled the daily application of rigorous punishments; and acts of insubordination in the inferior ranks were by no means uncommon. Wellington applied all his powers to overcome these vices, and to render his army more pliable and effective. But while he gave himself up to this painful duty with a courage and devotion which can never be forgotten, he had the mortification to see himself abandoned by some, and abused and calumniated by others. Not only were the wants of his own troops ill supplied by the English minister, but he was forced, as he says himself, to attend to the wants of the Allies, as well as to those of the English army.

Though sufficiently drilled and disciplined, the Portuguese troops were destitute of experience. The regular armies of Spain were dispersed, destroyed, and demoralised, and their wrecks, instead of gathering to a head again, had gone to swell guerilla bands. More than ever, therefore, must the war of campaign be carried on by the Anglo-Portuguese army exclusively, though no supplies could be obtained for it except by purchase. Almost all the regimental chests were empty. The Council of Regency had not energy enough to support the commander-in-chief as it ought to have done. It favoured rather the views of the *Fidalgos*, who were opposed to English influence, because they dreaded the re-establishment of ancient institutions, from which, by little and little, they had freed themselves during the preceding reigns. Finally, Portugal was so completely exhausted, that the English Government, partly on that account, partly because it had little confidence in the probable issues of the war, began seriously to prepare the means of safely re-embarking its own troops.

Such was the general state of affairs when an event of a private nature suddenly and unexpectedly produced a modification in the views of the English cabinet. The disastrous expedition to Walcheren was followed by angry debates in the House of Commons. These led to a duel between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, consequent upon which Lord Castlereagh became Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, and the Marquis of Wellesley Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Wellington had revealed to the latter, during his sojourn at Seville, his plans for the deliverance of the Peninsula, and had proved to him at the same time, that it would be impossible to carry them into effect without the energetic support of the cabinet. It was this consideration, and the hope of winning honour to his country and to his family, which determined the ex-Governor-General of India to accept the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs, in spite of the lively repugnance which he had more than once manifested to the duties of that office. The party which was pledged to the war, and to maintain the national honour, found in him an active and devoted leader.

To understand aright the importance of this change, it is necessary to bear in mind that Lord Castlereagh, disheartened by the peace between France and Austria, and by the unfortunate result of the Walcheren expedition, had hesitated whether he should continue or withdraw from the war in the Peninsula. It even appears, judging from his correspondence, that he was inclined towards the latter of these solutions. During the month of September 1809, Wellington had been consulted by him first, as to the feasibility of defending Portugal, and

next as to the probable expense to be incurred, in case the war should be continued.

Wellington delivered his opinion on these several points in a letter of the 24th of November, addressed to Lord Castlereagh's successor, "a masterpiece of precision and clear judgment," which contains among others the following passage: "Although I consider the Portuguese Government and army as the principals in the contest for their own independence; and that success or failure must depend principally upon their own exertions, and the bravery of their army, (and I am sanguine in my expectations of both from them, when excited by the example of British officers and troops,) I have no hope of either, if His Majesty should now withdraw his army from the Peninsula; or if it should be obliged to evacuate it by defeat. I have no doubt that the immediate consequence of withdrawing from the Peninsula would be the possession of Lisbon by the enemy, probably without contest, and that other consequences would follow, affecting the state of the war, not only in Portugal, but in Spain."

Encouraged by this reasoning, and by the eloquence of the Marquis of Wellesley, the minister determined on making fresh sacrifices in order to continue the war. This resolution, which appears perfectly natural to us, but which was at the time an act of no common energy, excited a great outcry among the opposition, and the English press; of which the policy, ever since the battle of Talavera, had been to undervalue on all occasions the conduct of Wellesley in the Peninsula. The English people, little accustomed to the embarrassments of a serious war, unfortunately permitted themselves to be misled by these sophisms; indeed, matters went so

far, that the Common Council of London petitioned against a bill for granting to the commander-in-chief a pension of 2000*l.* a year; and implored the sovereign that he would prevent his ministers from awarding distinctions to one who, in the campaign of Talavera, "had exhibited, with equal rashness and ostentation, nothing but a useless valour."*

The same recriminations were uttered in Parliament. Lord St. Vincent, Lord Granville, Earl Grey, the Earl of Moira, in the Lords; Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Ward, General Tarleton, and Mr. Whitbread, in the Commons, delivered themselves with great vehemence against the war, and against the manner in which it was conducted. "Why reward Sir Arthur Wellesley?" said they. "His actions are imprudent, foolish, presumptuous. He does not know how to provide for the subsistence of his soldiers; he has ventured into the heart of Spain with troops incapable of manœuvring; he has exposed our army to unexampled calamities, and has conducted himself throughout so as to merit punishment rather than reward. The impossibility of defending Portugal with an English army supported by Portuguese levies is so self-evident, that to reason upon it any further would be worse than ridiculous. Before six months are over, if our troops do not escape on board of ship, the only English soldiers left in the Peninsula will be prisoners." Talavera was in their eyes nothing more than an exhibition of inconsiderate rashness and victorious temerity. "It is truly melancholy and alarming," said Mr. Calcraft, "that Wellington should have the impertinence to speak of defending Portugal with 50,000 men, of whom 20,000 only are English; for if the French entertain serious

* Alison, vol. xiii. p. 56.

designs upon that country, before three months are over Wellington and his army will be in England. Neither Portugal nor any other country can be defended by such victories as that of Talavera." Indeed there was one general—a good and brave soldier too—who wrote, that "to propose maintaining himself in Portugal is the climax of error."

Against such assertions as these, Lords Wellesley and Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Canning, and Mr. Wyndham, protested, by appealing, on the one hand, to the misconduct of the Spanish army and government,—on the other, to the happy results which the campaign, considered as a whole, had produced. They insisted particularly on this point:—that but for the talent and bravery of Wellington, Portugal would have been invaded, and that, too, at a moment when it was destitute of all organised means of defence. The opposition was, however, so strong, that the speakers on the government side were obliged to point out to it the danger of a landing on the shores of England,—a danger which they considered to be imminent, should the Emperor succeed in establishing his authority all over the Peninsula. This argument, skilfully handled by Lord Wellesley, produced such an effect that, on a division, the ministerial side obtained a majority for the continuance of the war and the acknowledgment of Wellington's services, of 144 votes against 94 in the House of Lords, and 263 against 167 in the House of Commons.

So far all was well; but the general tone of the debate, as well as the hostile temper of the English people, rendered the government timid beyond expression. Instead of adopting the bold measures which the situation demanded, they wrote on all occasions to the commander-

in-chief,—"We are powerless. Be prudent; and, above all, run no risks." If Wellington had been a common man, avoiding difficulties and fearing to take upon himself grave responsibility, the struggle in Spain would have been at that time abandoned.

On the continent, men judged from what was passing in England, that the war in the Peninsula would be of no long continuance, and, that on the very first check, the British government would find itself obliged to recall its troops. This opinion was even expressed in several articles of the "Moniteur," and there is every reason to believe that it inspired Napoleon with the fatal resolution to undertake, while the war was still going on in Spain, his great struggle with Russia.

CHAP. IX.

THIRD INVASION OF PORTUGAL. — MASSENA'S PLAN. — WELLINGTON'S SYSTEM OF DEFENCE. — ENERGETIC MEASURES ADOPTED. — LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS. — FIRST MOVEMENTS OF THE FRENCH. — ASTORGA TAKEN. — CIUDAD RODRIGO BESIEGED. — WELLINGTON INACTIVE. — NEY ATTACKS CRAWFURD'S DIVISION. — INVESTMENT OF ALMEIDA.—FEELING AT LISBON AND IN THE ANGLO-PORTUGUESE ARMY.—THE REGENCY OPPOSED TO THE GENERAL'S PLANS.—BATTLE OF BUSACO. — MASSENA TURNS THE POSITION AND ADVANCES UPON LISBON. — HALTS BEFORE THE LINES. — ACTIVITY OF WELLINGTON. — ACTS UPON THE DEFENSIVE. — HIS REASONS. — RETREAT OF MASSENA UPON SANTAREM. — WELLINGTON ESTABLISHES HIMSELF AT CARTAXO. — HE INTRENCHES AND FORMS A NEW LINE OF DEFENCE ON THE LEFT OF THE TAGUS. — SOULT SUPPORTS THE ARMY OF PORTUGAL. — CAPTURE OF OLIVENZA. — DEFEAT OF MENDEZABAL AT GEBORA. — SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF BADAJOS.—RETREAT OF MASSENA.—AFFAIRS OF POMBAL, REDINHA, CONDEIXA, FOZDARUNCA, AND OF SABUGAL.—MASSENA RE-ENTERS SPAIN. — DEVISES A NEW PLAN OF OPERATIONS. — HIS DIFFICULTIES. — INSUBORDINATION OF MARSHAL NEY. — END OF THE CAMPAIGN. — MISERABLE STATE OF PORTUGAL. — BLOCKADE OF ALMEIDA BY THE ENGLISH. — BATTLE OF FUENTES D'ONORO. — GENERAL BRENIER ABANDONS ALMEIDA AFTER BLOWING UP PART OF THE WORKS.

THE check at Walcheren had seriously affected the military strength of Great Britain, and added to the embarrassments of the Government. Her best soldiers choked up the hospitals; the country was inundated with paper money; the expenses of enlistment became enormous, and the want of men and money increased

from day to day. Wellington's patriotism made every allowance for the Government in so critical a situation. Though the responsibility of the war had become more serious than ever, in consequence of the late debates, and though the ministers, in acceding to the proposals of the commander-in-chief, had formally announced to him that for the future this responsibility would rest upon him entirely, he abstained from demanding from them larger means than they might reasonably be expected to supply. "I have no wish," he writes to Mr. Villiers, "to throw upon ministers the responsibility of failure, by asking from them larger succours than they can furnish, nor to give to a government which is feeble, and which must be conscious of its weakness, a pretext for withdrawing the army from a position in which, according to my view of the case, the honour and interest of the country require that it should be maintained as long as possible."

In spite of all the difficulties by which he was surrounded,—the ill will of the Spaniards, the bad faith of the Portuguese Regency, the want of energy in the British Government, and the despondency of his own troops, Wellington exhibited a trustfulness, coolness, and determination, which it is impossible too much to admire. If, at that period, less confident in himself, in the valour of his soldiers, and in the excellency of his cause, he had paid attention to the sinister predictions of his fellow-countrymen, the war would have ceased, and Spain been reduced to submission. Spanish historians themselves are obliged to admit that fact.*

* Toreno, vol. iii. p. 277. Even M. Thiers does something like justice to Wellington in regard to this matter. See vol. iii. p. 392. First edition.

The first care of the commander-in-chief was to fortify Lisbon; the only position capable, by its power of resistance, of insuring the success of ulterior operations, and of covering, in case of need, the re-embarkation of the English troops. In the month of October, 1809, he had given orders to construct, upon the heights of Torres Vedras, which enveloped one part of that position, all the works necessary for the erection of an enormous intrenched camp. By means of this camp, Wellington proposed to render secure the flanks and rear of his army, to provide himself with the means of making head against a superior force, to render a blockade impossible, and to enable him to give aid to irregular troops, whose business it was to harass the enemy, without having any thing to fear for his communications with the fleet. He had himself pointed out the position and outline of each separate work, leaving to the engineers only the care of attending to details.

While these works were going on unobserved by the enemy, the commander-in-chief took the most energetic measures to provide for the defence of the country against a French invasion. He obtained, in the first instance, that his authority as marshal-general of the kingdom should be independent of the local government, and that it should be absolute in every thing which had reference to the regular troops, to the militia, or the Ordinanzas. Armed with this power, and strong in the support of England, he demanded next that the ancient military laws of the kingdom should be put in force, by virtue of which the entire male population could be enrolled and assembled under arms. He required next that the people should be compelled to destroy their mills and bridges, to drive away their

cattle, to lay waste their fields, to abandon their homes, and carry with them every thing which could be of the smallest use to the invaders. The regency, on each occasion, objected to these rigorous measures, because their own popularity might be compromised; whereupon Wellington did not hesitate to assume the responsibility as his own. He addressed to the Portuguese a severe proclamation, in which, among other things, he said, "I give notice that every functionary who shall remain in a town or village, after having received orders to withdraw from it, and every person, whatever his condition may be, who shall hold communication with the enemy, or aid and assist him in any manner, shall be judged to be a traitor to the state, and punished accordingly."

A system analogous to this had been previously recommended by Lloyd for the defence of England. It came, a little later, to be applied with perfect success by the Russian armies. Wellington did not shrink from proposing it to Portugal, resting his defence on the stern law of necessity — on the intense hatred of French domination with which the inhabitants were inspired — and, lastly, upon the undeniable principle that a people, in order to preserve their nationality, are bound to oppose the enemy, to destroy their goods, or to take them away with them when retiring. He hoped by these means to starve the French; to compel them to keep together in large masses in order to escape from insurrectionary bands; and thus to neutralise a portion of their force by rendering them at all moments uneasy about their flanks and rear.

Some French authors have blamed this system in the strongest language. "Not a single voice," writes one of them, "was raised in deprecation of this bar-

barous and detestable method of seeking the accomplishment of a military plan; and yet how many maledictions were poured out upon Turenne after his devastation of the palatinate! Now Turenne, however, was acting in an enemy's country, whereas Wellington had not even that wretched excuse to plead; for Portugal was the ally of England."* But it was precisely because Wellington was defending the country of an ally who abhorred French rule, that he was able to impose upon it such lamentable sacrifices. The Portuguese nation, without doubt, groaned under its sufferings. It did not, however, execrate the general who advised the people to suffer. It is one thing to lay waste a country which we are defending—it is another to give up to pillage a conquered province. That which is glorious in the former case becomes detestable in the latter. Moreover, while he pressed for the adoption of these extreme measures, Wellington did what he could to soften the evils which resulted from them. The poor inhabitants of the country, obliged to abandon and destroy every thing which contributed to the support of their families, obtained from him all the assistance which, humanly speaking, it was possible to afford. He wrote in their favour to Lord Liverpool a touching letter, praying him "to rouse the benevolent feelings of the British people towards the Portuguese. On other occasions they have been ready to succour foreigners smitten by the hand of Providence, or by a powerful and cruel enemy."

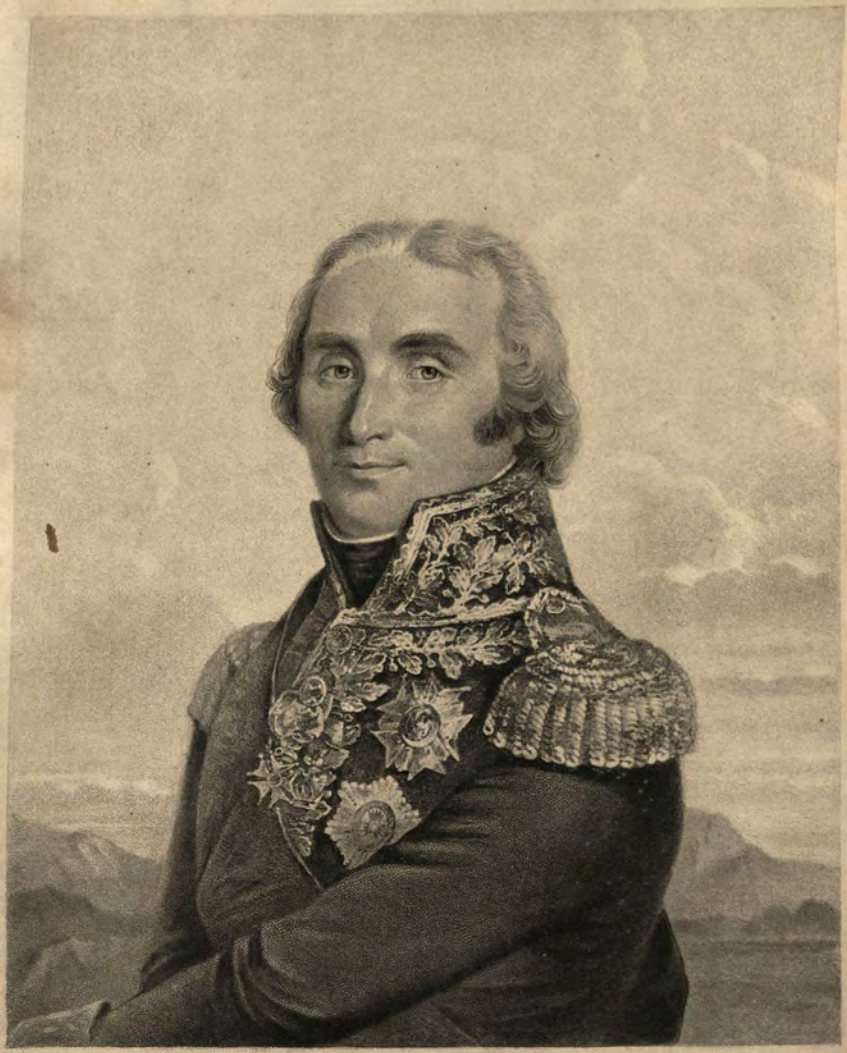
In spite of the secret opposition of the regency and the fidalgos, the prescribed measures were executed with tolerable accuracy; thanks to the energy of the

* General Roche, Mémoires de Massena, vol. vii. p. 171.

commander-in-chief and to the patriotism of the Portuguese nation, which showed itself, under the circumstances, very superior to the enthusiastic but versatile people of Spain.

Meanwhile the national troops, at the opening of the campaign, did not exceed 56,000 men, of whom one-half belonged to the militia; while the English force, exclusive of the garrison of Gibraltar, amounted to 38,000 only. Of these upwards of 6000 were in hospital or on detachment, and 7000 garrisoned Cadiz. Thus, after deducting the Ordinanzas, Wellington could not arrange more than 80,000 well-armed men for the defence of a frontier measuring, between Braganza and Ayamonte, a length of 145 leagues; and for restraining an enemy whose disposable force in the Peninsula could not fall short of 280,000 combatants. This great disproportion, however, did not occasion him the slightest uneasiness; because he had long satisfied himself that Portugal could be defended against superior numbers.

Anxious to gain time, that he might complete his lines, gather in the harvest, discipline the Portuguese troops, and complete the organisation of the Ordinanzas, Wellington determined to take up an advanced position. For this purpose he established four divisions of English infantry, or 38,000 men, at Viseu, Guarda, Pinhel, and Celerico; 5000 of the same troops, under the orders of Hill, at Abrantes; Beresford's Portuguese at Thomar; 3000 cavalry in the valley of the Mondego; Baccellar and Sylviera with twenty-one regiments of militia in the provinces across the Douro; ten regiments of militia, one of Portuguese cavalry, and the Lusitanian legion in the country between Pena-Macor and the Tagus; and the other nineteen regiments of militia upon both banks of



Maurin del. Héliographie A. Riffaut sculp.

MASSÉNA

Imp. Saraxin r. le Cœur 6. Paris

the river; part at Algarves, and part in the Alentejo to cover the right of the line of defence. This wing was besides protected by Romana, who carried on a partisan warfare between Albuquerque and Ayamonte; at the same time that the extreme left was covered by 15,000 Spaniards, who defended Galicia and the Asturias. Finally, Anglo-Portuguese garrisons were thrown into the fortresses of Algarves, Elvas, Almeida, Valencia, Peniche, Abrantes, and Setuval.

These able dispositions enabled Wellington, without compromising his line of retreat, to provide for all accidents, and to oppose on each menaced point a sufficient number of troops to hinder the enemy from advancing except in force; a proceeding which the absence of magazines of provisions rendered extremely difficult.

Such was the state of affairs when Massena received orders to assume the offensive. That old warrior had no need of the warning of Essling to make him comprehend that the limits of prudence were everywhere overpast, and that the system of conquest on which the empire depended must, sooner or later, lead to a catastrophe. Oppressed with a load of physical and moral lassitude, the result of twenty-years of war and of painful toil, gloriously accomplished, the victor of Zurich exhibited little ardour, and appeared, besides, to be under the dominion of gloomy forebodings. He knew that Ney and Junot complained, because they had been placed in secondary positions; that his army was inadequate in numbers, and still more in *matériel;* and that the character of the soldier had become visibly changed by the bad example of his chiefs. Hence there were required all the blandishments of which Napoleon was master, to induce

him, under such circumstances, to accept the command. The army, which was not ignorant of the fact, and saw its new chief, weary of war, giving himself over to pleasures which were unbecoming his age, and assuming that air of negligence which is fatal to the prestige and influence of a commander, said openly, "Massena is growing old." This estimate was not incorrect; yet we shall see that there were moments when the Prince of Essling still showed himself worthy of his brilliant reputation.

The Emperor had determined that the army of Portugal should employ part of its resources in conducting the sieges of Almeida, and Ciudad Rodrigo. Accordingly, on the 21st of April, the Duke of Abrantes, commanding the 8th corps, had reduced Astorga, the occupation of which, conjointly with that of Asturias, was necessary to render the right of the army secure. The siege of Ciudad Rodrigo was confided to Marshal Ney: 5,500 ill-disciplined Spaniards held that place under the command of General Herrasti, a respectable veteran still endowed with all the energy of youth. The trenches were opened in the night between the 15th and 16th of June, and the work went briskly forward during the succeeding days.

Wellington, who had quitted Badajoz in order to prevent the capture by surprise of Ciudad Rodrigo, conceived the idea at one time of succouring this latter place, or at all events of withdrawing the garrison. But he was diverted from the project by the conduct of the regency, which left him destitute of provisions, and still more by the fear of entangling himself in an operation which was as full of danger as it was little calculated to insure the success of the campaign. It was painful, however, to permit the important fortress to fall without

striking a blow, and to abandon to its fate a brave and devoted garrison. The army imagined that its honour would suffer a stain from the proceeding, and loudly expressed its anxiety to be led to the front. The Spaniards, on the other hand, demanded that the effort should be made as a proof of good faith; and the Portuguese as a means of removing the war from their own firesides. Finally, the thought could not but occur to Wellington himself, that if he held aloof, his promise to defend the Peninsula would appear to be an empty boast. Nevertheless, he steadily refused to compromise his army in order to save a town, the possession of which was by no means indispensable to the success of his plan of campaign. "I should be neglectful," he writes to Don Miguel Forjas, "of my duty to the king, to the prince regent, and the common cause, if I could permit myself to be influenced by public clamour or by fear, so as to modify the system of operations which I have adopted after mature deliberation, and which daily experience proves to be the only one which can bring the matter to a successful issue." Firmness like this constitutes a sort of courage which is far more rare as well as more worthy of commendation than that which consists in braving death amidst the exciting scenes of a battle-field.

It was not a campaign alone, but a terrible war which Wellington had undertaken. "If he had lost," says Napier, "but 5000 men, his government would have abandoned the struggle—if he had lost 15,000, he himself must have withdrawn from it." His disposable force did not exceed 56,000 combatants, and he could not have directed more than 20,000 or 25,000 upon Ciudad Rodrigo, without exposing his rear. The

militia, moreover, deserted *en masse*, to attend to the vintage. Every consideration, therefore, pointed out to the commander-in-chief that it was his duty to decline the operation which had been proposed to him. Massena, on the other hand, was anxious that he should undertake it, and did his best to provoke him to it, by withdrawing a portion of his troops, by affecting great carelessness, and by putting forth proclamations, in which he said that Wellington was afraid;—that every thing was prepared for his embarkation, and that, indifferent to the calls of honour, he permitted the towns of his ally to fall without firing a shot to save them or redeem his own pledge. All these devices, however, availed nothing. Lord Wellington had the courage to brave criticism and ridicule, and to wait for the moment of action, which he had settled for himself. Antiquity presents us with a single specimen of such firmness. "If you are a great general," said Sylla to Marius, "come and fight." "If you are a great general," replied Marius to Sylla, "compel me to fight." So acted Massena and Wellington.

It was under such circumstances that the Governor of Ciudad Rodrigo, finding that a practicable breach had been effected, that the garrison was left to itself, and that the columns of attack were formed, hoisted the white flag; and on the 9th of July, at six in the morning, entered into a negotiation with Ney amid the ruins of the fortress. The marshal treated him as a brave soldier, and granted him the honours due to a gallant defence. The loss to the Spaniards in this siege was 500 men, to the French 1174, of whom 168 were killed.

Meanwhile General Crawfurd was maintaining the defence of the Coa, in the neighbourhood of Al-

meida, with 4000 infantry, 1100 cavalry, and 6 guns. Emboldened by some partial successes obtained on the 4th and 11th July, over parties of French troops, he determined, in spite of Wellington's orders, to accept battle on the further side of that river. It was a great mistake, for on the 24th, 24,000 men, under the command of Ney, of whom about 5000 were cavalry, and 30 pieces of cannon, fell like a thunderbolt upon the English division, intending to cut it off from Almeida, and then to drive it into the deep valley of the Coa. They would have unquestionably accomplished their purpose, but for the bold front and presence of mind of the English general, who, in spite of the vigour of the attack, succeeded in passing the Coa without losing his communications. He then continued his retreat with such coolness and bravery, that Marshal Ney, after three vigorous attempts to force the passage of the bridge, found himself obliged to abandon the pursuit. Crawfurd, however, would have sustained heavy loss had not Montbrun, at the moment when Ney attacked, refused, under the pretext that he took orders only from Massena, to fall in upon the line of the English retreat.

The result of this offensive movement was, that Almeida became invested. That place, which was then considered to be the strongest in Portugal, had a garrison of 6000 men, composed partly of troops of the line, partly of Portuguese militia. Colonel Cox, the governor, had promised Wellington to make an obstinate defence, but the effeminacy, and still more the bad spirit, of the troops, combined, with an unfortunate accident, to defeat his expectations. During the night of the 26th August, after ten days of open trenches, a fearful

explosion was heard. At the same instant an immense volume of flame and smoke rose above the city, and the terrain of the attack was covered with the debris of gun-carriages, with stones and *matériel.* Two shells falling upon a magazine which contained about 15,000 lbs. of gunpowder had produced this disaster. A full third of the inhabitants (500 men) with a great many soldiers perished, and only a few houses remained entire. Wellington states that the explosion made a breach in the place, that it threw down all the cannon, except three, into the ditches, and that out of the whole stock of ammunition only six barrels of powder were saved. But Belmas, Augoyat, Koch, and Londonderry assert that the place was not exposed, and that only a few rents were made in the curtain, near the castle. According to this latter version, which appears to be the more correct one, the defence was still possible, and that it really might have been maintained is proved by the fact, that in order to bring about a surrender, the soldiers informed their officers that if the governor should refuse to capitulate, they would themselves open the gates to the French troops. Cox who, previously to the explosion of the magazine, had twice been summoned by Massena, and twice refused to surrender, found himself obliged on the night between the 27th and 28th to yield to the revolt. On the following day the garrison, about 5000 strong, marched out of the place. The militia returned to their homes, on the condition that they would not serve against France during the remainder of the war. The troops of the line, the 24th Portuguese, disgraced themselves by accepting service in Massena's army.

The enemy found in Almeida considerable stores of

food and ammunition. To Wellington the loss of the place was exceedingly mortifying, because, observing the lack of vigour with which the French pushed on the siege, he had determined upon forcing the passage of the bridge and carrying off the garrison with its artillery. Unfortunately, however, the explosion of the powder-magazine occurred just as he was completing his preparations for that bold enterprise.

The fall of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo greatly afflicted the army, and produced lively discontent at Lisbon, where the populace had succumbed to the unsatisfactory influence of the Principal Souza, who, from the moment of his introduction into the Council of Regency, had never ceased to counteract the measures of the English general. "In imitation of the fatal conduct of the Central Junta," writes Wellington to Lord Liverpool, "the Portuguese Regency, since the late changes, have flattered instead of coercing the mob of Lisbon, which will become dangerous in proportion as the new system is persevered in. They have likewise, in imitation of the same body, interfered in the military operations, and deliberated upon the propriety of adopting offensive measures, and of moving the army into Spain. * * * Then they have cast reflections and suspicions on every Portuguese employed by Beresford and me." *

General Jomini censures Wellington for having made no movement while the sieges of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo were going on, and with having kept his troops dispersed at a time when, by concentrating them, he might have impeded the operations of the French without compromising the success of his own plans. There is

* Letter to Lord Liverpool, 13th of September, 1810.

some justice in the remark. Indeed, though Wellington succeeded in collecting his forces as soon as he was attacked, Hill's remote position must have rendered inevitable the severance of the English army, if Massena had acted more vigorously. Still, the political considerations enumerated above, the temper of men's minds at Lisbon, the spirit of opposition to the general's plans which was beginning to exhibit itself among many of his own officers, and the undoubted numerical superiority of the French, forbid us to blame the care with which Wellington abstained from committing his troops in the open field.

We have seen that Napoleon, on the solicitation of Joseph, had at length authorised the expedition into Andalusia, which presented to his view the threefold advantage of being comparatively safe, of securing to the French army ample resources, and of rendering it impossible for the English to establish themselves at Cadiz, in the event of their being driven out of Portugal. The Emperor's first idea was to march the whole of his disposable force, by both banks of the Tagus, upon Lisbon; an operation which, without doubt, must have produced very decisive results. By and by, when he consented to the expedition into Andalusia, it was under the persuasion that 30,000 out of the 70,000 men entrusted to Joseph might, at the termination of the enterprise, be detached and move upon the Alentejo; and that if these 30,000 men should push upon Lisbon by the left of the Tagus, while Massena marched upon the right with the 60,000 men of Ney's and Junot's corps, 15,000 of the Guard and 10,000 of Montbrun's cavalry, not to mention Drouet's reserve, it would be utterly impossible for the English to offer any resistance to such an overwhelming force. Their embarkation would then become inevitable,

and the campaign of 1810 prove the last of the Spanish war. All these anticipations, however, utterly failed; because the Emperor, far removed from the scene of action, had formed a false notion of the state of affairs in the Peninsula, and because he believed that there was at the disposal of his officers a greater amount of force than they really possessed. Massena, therefore, to whom the merit belongs of having taken a juster view than he of the circumstances of the case, set out for Portugal with the conviction upon his mind that no support was to be expected from any quarter.

The possession of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida supplied the French general with a good base, and an excellent pivot of manœuvre; still he would have done well had he followed out his original intention, by razing the latter of these places to the ground. His army, when he commenced his march, numbered in all 58,956 men, of whom 7468 were cavalry, with 84 field-pieces. It ought to have been joined *en route* by the 9th corps, under Drouet, estimated at 20,000, and by 8000 or 9000 more, under General Gardanne.

The offensive movement began in the beginning of September. Wellington was then at Celerico with 30,000 men, and no more. He considered it prudent not to await the enemy at that point, for his front was so extended, that a rapid pursuit through the town would have carried the French to Alva, and compelled the English army to give battle before the arrival of Hill, and perhaps of Leith also.

Instead, however, of marching upon Celerico, and gaining Coimbra by the left bank of the Mondego, Massena, misled by false intelligence, or else fearing to encounter the difficulties which had beset Junot's march

in 1808, took the longer and more difficult route by Viseu; a road which presented this, among other inconveniences, that it forced him to abandon one line of communications before he had been able to establish another.

On the 21st September, the same day on which the French army reached Viseu, the English generals found themselves reunited at Alva. From that moment Coimbra was covered, and the retreat rendered secure. One contingency alone could compromise it; namely, if Marshal Soult, profiting by the isolation and dispersion of the troops appointed to defend the Alentejo, should throw himself upon that province with 25,000 or 30,000 men, and compel the English to re-embark. Happily the Duke of Dalmatia, besides being out of humour on many accounts, attached too much importance to the blockade of Cadiz, and to the pacification of Andalusia, to think of making so important diversion in favour of a chief whom he regarded rather as a rival than a commander.

Arrived at the Mondego, Wellington had it in his power either to continue his retreat to the lines of Torres Vedras, or to accept a battle, by disputing the passage of the river. The former arrangement was the safest, as well as the most in unison with the plan of operations on which he had determined. Nevertheless, he gave the preference to the latter, because the condition of affairs, and the state of men's minds, rendered its execution desirable. In spite of his proclamations, and strong remonstrances, the Portuguese Regency had neglected to carry into effect the defensive plan which had been adopted by common consent. "Between the Mondego, the Tagus, and the lines of Torres Vedras, the country still presented food enough to support the

French throughout the winter; and the people were neither prepared to receive the enemy, nor themselves to destroy their own property." * It became necessary, therefore, either to continue the retreat, laying waste the country as he went along, or else to stop the French upon the Mondego long enough to obtain the same result by means more honourable to the army, and less fatal to the moral influence of its chief. Wellington did not hesitate between these two issues. He took up a position on the Sierra de Busaco, and caused Leith's division, which was at Thomar, to come in with all haste; as well as Hill's, which yet lay in rear of Alva, upon the Sierra Murcelha.

The corps of Marshal Ney, about 40,000 strong, arrived on the 25th September in front of this position. At that moment the preparations of the English general were still incomplete. Leith's division, the 1st, had not yet joined, nor that of Hill; only 25,000 men were in line. And, in consequence of the extent of the Sierra, wide intervals separated the divisions one from another. These circumstances did not escape the sagacity of Ney, who, in concert with Reignier, proposed to make an immediate and vigorous attack. But the Prince of Essling, who had halted three leagues in rear, under the persuasion that the enemy would not pause in front of Coimbra, did not reach the ground till considerably past noon. He reconnoitred the position, and satisfied himself that it would be dangerous to attack before the arrival of the 8th corps. This lamentable delay enabled Wellesley to concentrate all his means of defence, and, on the following day, the favourable opportunity was lost.

* Napier.

The allied army occupied on the Sierra de Busaco, which rises about 250 feet above the plain, a position to a certain extent unassailable in front, but having this defect that it was too extensive. Hill's division, covered by the river, formed the right and defended the debouches of the hills. Then came, in order of battle, Leith's corps, the divisions of Picton, Spencer, and Crawfurd, this latter being placed in advance of the Chartreuse. The 4th division, commanded by Cole, stood upon the extreme left where it guarded a pathway running towards Milheada. The cavalry fronted that village upon the plain, where it could manœuvre easily. And, lastly, fifty pieces of cannon were placed in battery upon the points most favourable for the action of artillery. Altogether the position presented so many obstacles to an attack, that no one believed that the Prince of Essling would attempt it. "Wellington alone," says Lord Londonderry, "was of a different opinion. All the other officers imagined that the French would turn our left, where the country was open." No doubt this operation would have been less difficult than the other; but it would have incurred the risk of a flank march parallel with the sea, and this it was which induced the English general to regard it as by no means probable. Besides, in order to provide against all accidents, he had directed Trant's corps to take post at Sardao, and to dispute with the enemy the road which passes through that village.

In a council of war, held on the evening of the 26th, Ney expressed great regret that the attack had not been made on the previous day, and maintained that it was no longer possible to carry the position. Junot, Eblé, commandant of artillery, and Fririon, chief of the

staff, were of the same opinion. Reignier, and Lazowski, chief engineer, declared that the attack, though difficult, held out fair chances of success. The Prince of Essling coincided with this latter opinion, and made in consequence his dispositions to attack on the morrow.

At an early hour, on the morning of the 27th, the second corps, massed in rear of St. Antonio, received orders to drive the enemy from the Chartreuse. The sixth, debouching from Moira, was to assail Busaco in front. Montbrun's cavalry was ordered to remain concealed behind a height on the left of the Busaco road, and the eighth corps, under Junot, was to form in columns of brigade in rear of Ney's corps and to act as a general reserve. Thus the attack was to be delivered on two points, separated one from the other by a very considerable space; a vexatious circumstance which, however, the nature of the ground rendered inevitable.

Massena counted chiefly on the success of Reignier, who had the least difficult country to traverse. Indeed, one of that general's divisions succeeded in mounting the slope and gaining the plateau between the divisions of Spencer and Picton; but the soldiers, out of breath and exhausted with fatigue, were scarcely formed when they were furiously attacked by the English troops, supported by a numerous artillery, and driven down the hill again with a loss of 2500 men.

This disaster is partly to be attributed to Ney, who, being too far off, and, if his countrymen are to be believed, exhibiting less impetuosity than he had done at Elchingen and Jena, commenced his attack too late, and thus enabled the English to overwhelm Reignier with a force twice as numerous as his own. The sixth corps

was not more fortunate than the second. Before Ney's columns could ascend the heights, defended by Crawfurd's light division, they were ravaged and shot down at a short range, charged home by fresh troops, taken in flank by a cloud of Portuguese, and hurled at last over abrupt precipices, whither they were still pursued for a time with the bayonet. This attack would have doubtless succeeded better had not the marshal delayed too long the advance of Marchant's division upon Chartreuse, which movement ought to have taken place simultaneously with that of Loison.

The loss to the French army in the battle of Busaco amounted to 4500 men; that of the English, according to an official statement, did not exceed, from the 25th to the 27th of September, 197 killed, 1014 wounded, and 58 missing. Wellington remarked with satisfaction, the courage and steadiness exhibited by the Portuguese army throughout the affair, the first in which it had been seriously engaged with the enemy.

Massena has been blamed for not supporting his troops with artillery, and because his reserves were too much withdrawn when Reignier's column closed with the enemy. Another charge has been brought against him by Londonderry and the authors of the "Victories and Conquests," "that he neglected to turn the left of the Allies by the Milheada road, where it would have been difficult to stop him." But, for the reasons stated above, we cannot assent to the justice of this criticism. It appeared, moreover, that the Prince of Essling, when he attacked the Sierra de Busaco, was ignorant that Hill's and Leith's corps had effected their junction with Wellington. His principal error lay in not having ordered the attack on the 26th. Ney, who considered it justi-

BATTLE OF BUSACO,

27 September 1810.

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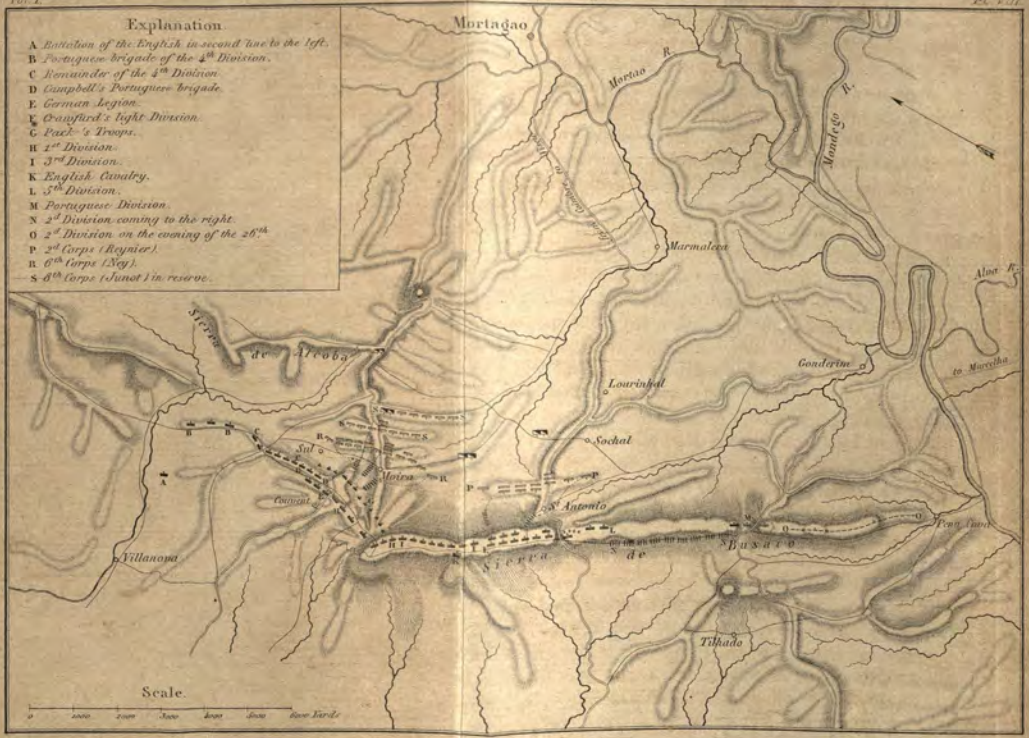


fiable on the 25th, foretold that on the 27th it would fail, and the same opinion was generally entertained throughout the army.

The battle of Busaco effected a great change in the moral condition of the belligerents, and reduced the Prince of Essling to the necessity of choosing between a halt at the foot of the mountain of Acobar without provisions, or a retreat in presence of an enemy from whom no movement could be concealed. Ney was anxious to retreat; but the commander-in-chief, suspecting the existence of a road on the right, where the land sloped downwards towards the sea, sent out during the night General Montbrun and Colonel Sainte-Croix, with a detachment of cavalry, to reconnoitre. These two officers found, in point of fact, a road passable for wheeled carriages; and Massena was informed of its existence at mid-day on the 28th. He availed himself of the circumstance with his usual ability. He maintained throughout the whole of the day a smart skirmish along the front of the enemy's line, as if he meditated a second attack; and at nightfall sent off Junot in profound silence, — then Ney, — then the baggage with 3000 wounded; and lastly Reignier, followed by a rear guard of dragoons. On the 29th all these corps debouched without interruption upon the plain of Coimbra; thanks to a misunderstanding which prevented Trant from arriving in time at the entrance of the defile of Boyalva. Monsieur Thiers blames Massena for having, by his lack of forethought, reduced himself to the necessity of discovering that road at all hazards. "It was his duty," says he, "to have ascertained its existence in the first instance, to which the slope of the country pointed; and then, having discovered it, to de-

ceive the English by a demonstration upon Busaco, while the main body of the army filed off by Boyalva."

We cannot assent to this view of the case. We believe, on the contrary, that the Prince of Essling would have committed an unpardonable error if he had entangled the whole of his troops in a bad road between the sea and an army in possession of heights from which all his movements could be observed. Be this, however, as it may, Wellington was no sooner informed (at midnight on the 20th) of the flank march of the Prince of Essling, than he quitted his position to avoid being cut off; and at an early hour on the following morning his army was in column of march along the direct road to Coimbra. Massena advanced parallel with the sea and within reach of the enemy by a road so bad and in such disorder, that his troops of all arms, his sick and his wounded, were mixed up together in absolute confusion. The Duke of Wellington committed a great mistake in not profiting by that circumstance. He ought to have instantly moved his cavalry and the infantry corps which was nearest to it upon the head of the defile; for it was not more than five leagues distant. He is to be blamed also for having entrusted the defence of Boyalva to a brigade of raw militia. The experience of what had occurred the previous year at Baños ought to have warned him against putting any confidence in troops of that description. Finally, Wellington did wrong in not taking steps to inform himself about the movements of the French army after the fruitless attack of the 27th.

Though the utmost activity had been displayed during ten months in constructing the lines of Torres Vedras, the Prince of Essling was still ignorant of their existence.

He was satisfied that the English would find no other position so strong as that from which he had dislodged them, and therefore believed that they were about to leave the country. This circumstance explains and perhaps justifies the determination at which he arrived of continuing, after Busaco, on the offensive. If he had been aware of the existence of the lines and of the state of the country about Lisbon, it would have been his duty to withdraw, and to wait for reinforcements, in order to resume the campaign with better prospect of success; as it was, his condition became, in a short time, so bad that he might well regard it as desperate. For in front of him he found an impregnable camp, with an army which became stronger as it retired, whilst his own must necessarily grow weaker from sickness and privations, in proportion as he withdrew himself from his base. Moreover, a formidable corps-d'armée drew together upon the Douro to disturb the French rear, which had already lost all safe communication with Spain. In a word, embarrassments and difficulties presented themselves at every step; which must render his retreat, in case of reverse, well-nigh impossible. Hence, after the affair of the 27th, Wellington expected that the French army would retire, or at all events would not cross the Mondego.

The Prince of Essling, however, as we have seen, was ignorant of most of the circumstances which rendered his position so critical; and was, besides, induced to follow up his enterprise, partly by the fear of deviating from the repeated orders of the Emperor, and partly because he still hoped to obtain effective support from the army of Andalusia.

The retreat from Busaco was not distinguished by

any remarkable incident. In proportion as the English army fell back, the entire population fled towards Lisbon; carrying with them their more valuable effects, and destroying what they were unable to remove. It is truly marvellous that a foreign general should have possessed influence enough to exact such grievous sacrifices from a people attached to their homes and strongly urged in an opposite direction by the nobles. The result testifies at once to the moral superiority which Wellington had acquired over them, and to the patriotism which, at that time, animated the unfortunate Portuguese. Great quantities of provisions, however, and some mills, escaped destruction, through the misconduct of the Regency, at every meeting of which the Bishop and the Principal Souza continued to complain that the Commander-in-chief had withdrawn the war into the heart of the kingdom instead of delivering a decisive battle and acting offensively in Spain. The Bishop even went so far as to refuse, on some ridiculous pretext, a sum of money which was required by the Commander-in-chief to supply the wants of the Portuguese army. Indeed, Souza and he carried matters so far that they endeavoured to form a party in open hostility to the English, and addressed to the Commander-in-chief anonymous letters full of threats.

It happened that at Leyria some of the magazines were plundered by the English troops. In order to repress these lamentable habits of disorder and drunkenness (common faults in British armies), Wellington caused the men taken in the act to be hanged, and severely reprimanded the officers of the regiments to which they belonged. Less scrupulous on this point, because a system of requisitions renders pillage necessary and in

some sort controls it, the French generals permitted their soldiers to empty the magazines, and to plunder the town of Coimbra thoroughly. But as disorder and indiscipline are inevitable in armies which have no settled means of subsistence, "a few days sufficed to dissipate resources which, had they been properly managed, would have fed Massena's troops for two months. He thus lost by the delay brought on by debauchery all the advantage which he had obtained from his dangerous march from Sardao to Boyalva."* In fact, the French troops were not in a condition to quit the town till the 4th.† If they had marched more rapidly, and gained Leyria, by passing the fords of the Mondego, Massena might have probably compelled the English general to accept battle under unfavourable circumstances; but there was no longer to be observed in his movements that promptitude of action which gave its character to the campaign of Zurich, though the campaign of Zurich is perhaps the least remarkable of all which have rendered his career illustrious.

The French army had scarcely quitted the Mondego, when Grant, Miller, and Wilson threw themselves, with 10,000 militia, upon the Sierras, and cut off its communication with Almeida. Three days afterwards, Colonel Grant surprised Coimbra, where he found Massena's depôts, with two or three thousand wounded. This bold *coup de main* ruined altogether the plan of invasion; for it separated the army of Portugal from its base, and

* Napier.

† General Koch endeavours to account for this loss of time by attributing it to the dilapidated state of Massena's carriages. But he deceives himself, or seeks to mislead others. The men were so worn out with drinking and debauchery, and the bonds of discipline so completely broken that they could not be moved.

obliged it, in the end, to take a new line of retreat. Still the Prince of Essling continued his march, taking no care whatever, of his communications, which became more and more compromised every day.

On the 10th of October he found himself in front of the famous lines of Torres Vedras, of which nothing up to that moment had revealed to him the existence. This is a fact which we find some difficulty in believing; though it conveys, when forced upon us, a just idea of the condition of the French army, in the heart of an insurrectionary country, where not one man was willing to espouse the cause of the Emperor. Yet Wellington himself had entered his camp on the 8th of October, with 22,000 English infantry, 3000 cavalry, and 30,000 Portuguese.

The camp in question consisted of three lines of defence. The first stretched from Alhandra to the Tagus, where it is joined by the Zizandre. It followed the bend of the mountains, and stretched along for about nine leagues and a half. A little in rear of that line, at Piero-Negro, Wellington's head-quarters were established, where telegraphs were erected, in order to keep up prompt communications with all parts of the camp. The second line, situated about seven or eight miles from the first, presented a front of eight leagues. The third, intended to cover a forced embarkation, was much narrower, and lay about eight leagues from the second. This last, the strongest of them all, constituted a defensive position quite independent of the advanced line.

The front of the position was rendered difficult by the accumulation of all the obstacles which art and nature could provide. Its flanks were covered on one side by the ocean, on the other by the Tagus, the banks

LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS.

Lith. de Guyot

Engraved by J. Clats.

of which were strongly fortified. Its gorge was protected by a formidable fleet, and its inner space was so arranged as to offer an advantageous field of battle to the allied troops, from whatever side they might be attacked.

All the resources of art were applied to render this huge intrenched camp worthy of the part which it was intended to play. Redoubts occupied its abrupt spaces, the slopes of the heights were cut away as vertically as the soil would permit; double lines of abattis blocked up the valleys, continuous intrenchments defended the watercourses, the rivers were dammed up, and those which the rains did not naturally cause to overflow were supplied with gates; while abattis, strengthened by redoubts, covered the passes through the woods. Numerous artillery, turned towards all accessible points, commanded the different approaches, and equalised to a certain extent the defence of the whole line. The roads favourable for the enemy were destroyed, the rest were enlarged. New lines of communication were created to facilitate the movements of troops and the arrival of succours; the bridges were mined; in a word, every necessary measure was adopted to favour at the proper time an offensive movement by the allied troops.

When Wellington entered within the lines they consisted of 126 closed works defended by 29,751 men, and 247 pieces of cannon. The works at St. Jullien, intended to cover the point of embarkation, required a garrison of 5350 men, and mounted 94 pieces of artillery. History offers no other example of a position so skilfully and so strongly intrenched. Feeling that he was bound to neglect nothing which might tend to render it still more imposing, Wellington called in 6000 Spaniards, under the command of Romana, so that before

the end of October the lines were occupied by about 130,000 combatants, of whom more than 70,000 were regular troops.

The Marquis of Londonderry, at that time Wellington's adjutant-general, is of opinion that if Massena, instead of waiting for his artillery, had directed an immediate and vigorous attack on the works of Torres Vedras, he would have carried them; so great was the confusion which prevailed within the camp, and the ignorance both of generals and soldiers of the part which they were expected to play. The Prince of Essling judged otherwise. After closely reconnoitring the English lines, he came to the conclusion that the means at his disposal were unequal to the enterprise. And in truth, as he had only 50,000 men and ammunition enough for a single battle, he would have exposed himself, in the event of a repulse, to a great disaster. Colonel Jones, of the Engineers, approves of Massena's scruples, and the Count Toreno affirms, that the principal officers of the French army, when consulted upon the subject, expressed an opinion that it would be necessary to ask for reinforcements, and to reduce the operations, in the meanwhile, to a blockade. On the breaking up of the council, Massena sent General Foy to Paris, to give an account of the situation of the army in Portugal, and to solicit new instructions.

The Duke of Ragusa asserts that four courses were open to Massena:— 1st. He might attack the lines; 2nd. He might retire upon the Portuguese frontier, and establish himself at Almeida and Rodrigo; 3rd. He might march upon Oporto, and take post upon the right bank of the Douro; 4th. He might pass the Tagus, penetrate into the Alentejo, and take

possession of the mouth of the Tagus, opposite to Lisbon.

In the situation in which the Prince of Essling's army was placed, the first of these plans, on the admission of Marmont himself, offered no chance of success; the second amounted to an abandonment of the enterprise, and was contrary to the original instructions communicated by the commander-in-chief; the third would insure to the army the resources of Oporto, and enable it to take up an offensive position, but could no more tend than the second to bring about the result which Massena had been commissioned to achieve — the occupation of Lisbon. In adopting the fourth, if we may believe the Duke of Ragusa, "Massena would have entered into the open country of the Alentejo, and found there abundance of supplies. Manœuvring in a district favourable to his numerous cavalry, and posting himself opposite to Lisbon, he might have rendered difficult the entrance and navigation of the Tagus, by means of strong batteries which he could have erected. The army of the south of Spain, placed in the rear, would have formed his reserve, and that portion of Spanish Estremadura, which is very rich, would have supplied him with ample means of subsistence. Finally, had he sent a detachment against Abrantes immediately on his arrival, the place might have been carried and rendered strong enough to protect with ease the passage and windings of the Tagus.

"By and by, when his army received reinforcements, he could have returned to the right bank, leaving, at the same time, a part of his force upon the left, to occupy and defend the works which he had constructed at the mouth of the Tagus, and opposite to Lisbon.

Then, on arriving in front of the lines, he could have constructed a bridge opposite to Alenquer, and looking to the enormous supplies which were necessary to subsist the army and the immense population which had taken refuge in Lisbon, it is by no means certain that the city, so hemmed in, might not have been compelled to surrender. The great question would then have been decided." *

Instead of adopting one or other of these four plans, Massena determined to hold his ground without making any movement whatever. This fifth line of action was no doubt less advantageous than either the second or the third, for these would have at least saved the army and deferred operations to another campaign. But the Prince of Essling could not help himself; his instructions tied him down. With respect to the fourth scheme, we are far from admitting that it would have produced the results pointed out by the Duke of Ragusa. The Marshal, indeed, assumes that the French army could have carried Abrantes by assault, and that batteries, erected at the mouth of the Tagus, would have interrupted the navigation of the river. But a reconnaissance made by Montbrun, on the 31st October and 1st November, proved that Abrantes was safe from a *coup de main*, and with respect to the mouth of the Tagus, it is too wide for artillery to take effect from one bank to the other. As to interrupting the navigation of the river, it was impossible to hinder the fleet from provisioning Lisbon and the intrenched camp, because it could land its supplies at Fort St. Jullien, or at any other point along the coast between that for-

* Marmont's Memoirs, vol. iv. p. 30.

tress and the Zirandra. It is clear therefore that Massena could hardly act upon any other plan than that which he actually adopted.

In order to straiten as much as possible the position of the English, the French troops were distributed in the following manner: Junot at Sobral, opposite to the English advanced posts; Reignier close to the Tagus at Villa-Nova; the Duke of Elchingen near Alenquer, where he was also in support of the 8th corps. A part of the cavalry was detached to observe the Tagus, and to communicate with Santarem. These dispositions were extremely good, looking only to the blockade and the subsistence of the troops; but being adopted in front of a concentrated enemy, whose force was superior in numbers, they would have doubtless resulted in the destruction of the French army if that enemy had been either able or willing to act on the offensive.

The Prince of Essling, considering that Santarem would be a convenient place in which to establish his magazines and depôts, directed Marmont to collect there the materials necessary for a floating bridge. Unfortunately, the troops who took possession of the town committed, during five days, excesses equal to those which had occurred in Leyria; and which, on the present occasion, deprived the army of resources which it greatly needed. Meanwhile General Eblé, who had been charged with preparing the means necessary for crossing the Zezere and the Tagus, encountered unlooked-for difficulties. He found nothing in Santarem except two old sunken barges; for the naval arsenal contained neither anchors, nor pitch, nor cordage, nor planking, nor anything else which is required in the equipment of an effective workshop. Thanks, however, to his diligence

and untiring activity, the general succeeded in surmounting these obstacles. There might, by and by, be seen crowds of soldiers, transformed into mechanics, distributing and working up wood, iron, and hemp, with tools which they had fabricated for themselves. The construction of the bridges on the Isle of Lobau could not have been a task of greater difficulty.

To render his position safe, and to secure to him the means of acting on the left bank of the Tagus, it was necessary that Massena should occupy Abrantes. Montbrun was accordingly directed to make himself master of that point by storm or guile. He forced the passage of the Zezere, but lost, by his indolence, the opportunity of seizing the town and of capturing fifty Portuguese boats which lay hidden in a creek of the Tagus, opposite Chamusa. The Prince of Essling was greatly annoyed by this blunder. Nevertheless Montbrun occupied Punhete on the 31st October, and General Turlet forthwith connected that town with the right bank of the Zezere by a bridge upon trestles. A reconnaissance, executed subsequently to this operation, convinced the Commander-in-chief that Abrantes was safe from a *coup de main*, and that it would be idle for the present to think of making any use of it. He therefore directed General Lazowski to put Punhete in a state of defence, and General Eblé to carry thither the workshop from Santarem.

All this while Wellington was receiving reinforcements, throwing up new batteries, and constructing, or completing, new lines of defence. The morale of his troops was excellent. The officers and soldiers rivalled each other in zeal and good humour. "When off duty," says an eye-witness, "they took to shooting and

fishing as if they had been in England." Among other details bearing upon this subject, Lord Londonderry has given us the description of a brilliant fête which took place in the allied camp, to celebrate the nomination of Beresford to the Order of the Bath. This state of things presented a painful contrast to the condition of the French army, which became day by day more intolerable. Destitute of everything, exposed to the hostility of the population, and harassed in the rear by bodies of militia, and the Ordinanzas of the north, whom Wellington had called out and thrown among the mountains, the invaders were obliged to employ one half of their effective strength in a search after the means of subsistence. Indeed, the English army itself, with all the resources which it possessed in the fleet and in the support of the Portuguese nation, found extreme difficulty in feeding the inhabitants of Lisbon and the thousands of country people who had taken refuge behind the lines of Torres Vedras. Hence, some authors are of opinion, that if Marshal Soult had hastened to occupy Badajos, and to make from thence a demonstration upon Lisbon, he would have compelled Wellington to move out of his camp, and afforded Massena an opportunity of carrying that position. We are extremely doubtful, however, whether the English general would have adopted so dangerous a course in order to cover a city which was sufficiently protected from bombardment by a strong squadron and an arm of the sea 1500 toises in breadth. Besides, he had written to his own government, soon after his arrival in Lisbon, that he was strong enough to resist in his camp the united armies of Massena and Soult.

If Wellington had been obliged to quit the mouth of

the Tagus, and re-embark, it is probable that he would have found somewhere on the coast of Portugal another position capable of being rendered the base of his future operations. For to hold Portugal it was not enough to drive the English into the sea; it would be necessary, besides, to destroy their fleet and win the confidence of the population; two things alike difficult, under the circumstances in which the French empire was placed.

Meanwhile Wellington, though covered by his lines, was not without embarrassments and causes of disquiet. The mental malady of George III. had reawakened the hopes of the opposition, who sought by every possible means to attain to power. To counterbalance the results of Wellington's exploits, these statesmen blazoned abroad with discreditable adroitness the disasters of the previous campaign, the victories of Suchet in Catalonia, and the successes of Soult in Andalusia; and they obtained such an ascendency over the public mind, that the army could scarcely count upon receiving common support from the cabinet. It was openly said, both in parliament and through the press, that to leave the troops to die of hunger and privation amid the rocky lines of Torres Vedras was madness, and that it would be absolutely necessary to embark before winter.

While the opposition employed such means to render the war unpopular, the ministry, only half convinced of the wisdom of the policy which had been adopted, refused, indeed, to withdraw the army from the Peninsula, yet failed to support it vigorously. Of Spain, almost every member of the cabinet despaired; and there were few who could bring themselves to believe in the possibility of defending Portugal. We have seen how the best troops of England were sent to perish amid the swamps

of Walcheren. Money, likewise, which is as necessary to success as men, came in irregularly, and in sums wholly inadequate. "I do not receive," says Wellington, "one-sixth part of the money that is required to keep so great a machine in motion." Wherefore, abandoned, so to speak, to his own resources, he created a paper money for the use of the commissariat, and endeavoured, with the assistance of Mr. Stuart, to increase his own supplies by opening a trade in corn with America. This trade, which ought certainly not to have occupied either the time or the attention of Lord Wellington, saved the army and the people from destitution. Yet, influenced by the complaints of the corn merchants, who saw their profits diminished, the English ministers found it necessary to forbid it. Nor is this all. When Wellington complained of the attention which the government paid to the ill-founded complaints of some of his officers, they had the insolence to reply, that these officers were better generals than he; and at the same time, guided by a contemptible economy, they compelled him to send back the transports on which, in the event of a defeat, the safety of his army depended.*

The condition of Spain was not such as to render Wellington insensible to these annoyances. The ardour

* The real truth is, that the English Government had no belief at this time in the ultimate triumph of the Spanish cause. Wellington alone retained his faith in the future. He explained in a letter to Lord Liverpool, his own views in the matter, and foretold, not only what would be the enemy's plans and their mode of executing them, but the results which might be expected to follow. If every other line which he wrote were lost, that letter alone would testify to the wonderful genius and forethought of the Great Captain.

and enthusiasm of the people seemed to have given place to profound indifference, and in some of the provinces, to the dawn of a reconciliation with the French. By the defeat of their regular armies, their operations were reduced to a multiplicity of trifling affairs, which had neither unison nor common object among them. Generals, incapable, and at enmity one with another; fortresses badly provisioned and feebly defended; bands of ragged soldiers dying of hunger, or living like brigands; this was all that could be thrown into the balance by those boastful Spaniards who not long before believed themselves competent to play the principal part in the drama. Wellington vainly endeavoured to ameliorate the condition of the Spanish armies, and to introduce among them the system which had been adopted in Portugal. Those who were at the head of affairs had no wish to second his efforts, and, indeed, the British minister, Mr. Canning, had spoken so lightly of the patriots, that they could not well avoid believing their own military organisation to be excellent.

This state of things had been little improved by the meeting of the Cortes. Enthusiasm was not re-awakened. The pernicious influence of the local juntas was not diminished; military leaders were not chosen with greater discrimination, nor military operations conducted with greater skill; finally, the rivalries, the extravagances and faults of every kind which had rendered the Central Junta so odious, were renewed under the administration of the Cortes, which, besides, by its republican tendencies, disgusted the nobles and the priests not less than the Regency and the English aristocracy then in power. For the assembly was divided into three parties. That of the liberals, who desired reform; that

of the partisans of the ancient régime, who may be described as the servile party, and of which the influence had heretofore been considerable; and that of the *Americanos*, which consisted of members who fluctuated between the two extremes. The first care of the Cortes was to satisfy the reforming party by proclaiming the sovereignty of the nation, represented by its deputies, and conceding liberty to the press in the discussion of political subjects. The assembly took to itself the title of majesty, and presented an address to the Regency, which still exercised, in conjunction with it, the powers of the executive. It was not slow, however, in taking offence at the secret hostility of the Regency. Towards the end of October, 1810, its dignity was seriously compromised by an order given to the Governor of Cadiz; and that incident, combined with many others, compelled the Regents to resign. They were replaced by a new Regency, consisting of three members, who entered upon their duties on the 28th of October, 1810. Though agreeing in opinion with the reforming party, this Regency concerned itself as little as the former with questions of finance and military organisation. The great end of all government was neglected, and the turbulent activity of the liberals displayed itself in barren discussions, and in measures more hurtful than salutary to the national cause.

A large number of the deputies, influenced by the Souzas, entertained a design of placing upon the throne of Spain the Princess Charlotte, who actively intrigued to create a party for herself at Cadiz. But the views of that party were too obviously opposed to the interests of the Peninsula, and to the policy of the cabinet of London, for any one to venture upon an open declara-

tion of them. The majority of the assembly pronounced the members of the royal family incapable of governing as regents; and that vote, if it failed in putting a stop to intrigues, at all events got rid for a while of the solicitations and plots of the princess.

At this time, England, which all these discussions had thrown into bad odour with a large portion of the Spanish nation, became involved in a still more serious controversy with the government of Cadiz. The American colonies, disgusted with the violence and injustice of the Junta, had, about the end of 1808, loudly demanded freedom of commerce with England. Some satisfaction had been awarded to them upon that point; but matters could not rest there. The invasion of Andalusia by the French, and the ill-managed dissolution of the Central Junta, provoked an explosion. With more of ability than of loyalty, the colonies had selected, as a convenient time for this outbreak, the moment when the mother country, fallen into the depths of abasement, had begun to acknowledge the remote provinces as integral parts of the monarchy, by inviting them to elect deputies for the colonies. At the head of this revolt were the young creoles of the middle classes, and the young clergy; worked upon from without by the English, who dreaded the submission of Spain to France; and by the emissaries of Joseph, who were anxious to withdraw the colonies from the influence of the government of Cadiz and of Seville. The movement began in Caraccas, on the 19th of April, 1810. It was followed in the other provinces of Venezuela, in Buenos Ayres, Tucuman, Paraguay, the new kingdom of Grenada, New Spain, and Chili. In these two latter states the revolt was fortunately put down, but in Mexico the

struggle continued with varying successes, though more frequently to the disadvantage of the mother country than otherwise. The better to attain their object, the insurgents expressed the greatest respect for the king of Spain and for the Juntas. They declared loudly that they desired to exercise supreme power only till Ferdinand should be restored to the throne, or a settled government were installed by the Cortès. But in spite of these flattering assurances, no great while elapsed ere Spain beheld her most fruitful branches separating themselves from the parent stem.

It was on the 4th July that the regency became aware of the insurrection of Caraccas. Instead of acting at once, and with vigour, it wasted valuable time in deliberation. At last the advocates of violence prevailed, and troops were embarked, though not in numbers sufficient to suppress the revolt. This first error was, by and by, aggravated by the despatch of more important expeditions, equipped out of a portion of the supplies furnished by England, and consisting of the best of the Spanish regiments. Hence many vessels freighted in British ports for the war against France, were employed in blockading the colonies, and ruining the English commerce. Now this was a state of things which could exercise but an unsatisfactory influence over the Peninsula, while it more and more compromised the Cabinet of London, who desired in secret the triumph of the colonies, as a result favourable to British trade. The government of Cadiz, on the other hand, anxious to draw England into the quarrel, was met by an energetic protest. "Spain," said Lord Wellesley, "cannot expect that England will consent to measures destructive of her own commerce, and by which Spain no

longer directs her efforts against France, but rather against the sources of her own strength." The regency attached so little importance to this view of the case, that it refused to recognise the reasons advanced by the minister in favour of the treaty of amity which he had concluded with the colonies. It even charged the English government with duplicity and Machiavelism. Perceiving the point to which affairs were tending, Lord Wellesley proposed to the two parties to accept the mediation of England, and communicated, at the same time, with his brother, in order to ascertain whether, in his opinion, Great Britain ought to take part in a war with the colonies.

Wellington wrote, on that occasion, a letter which deserves to be cited as a remarkable proof of his intelligence and perspicacity. He was anxious that Great Britain should lay aside, at all events during the continuance of the war, all thought of mercantile considerations:—"Whatever may be the relations which are ultimately established between Spain and her colonies, the general result," said he, "must be to diminish, if not to extinguish, the foreign commerce of the Peninsula, a circumstance from which it is certain that Great Britain alone will profit. Neither can it be doubted that the colonies may separate from the mother-country at any moment they please. It will be an act of madness, therefore, in Spain, if she seek to hinder that separation by force, and it will be equally foolish in England to second, or even to encourage, such an attempt. The latter power may, by her influence and advice, prevent matters from arriving at this extremity, but she should attempt nothing more than to dissuade Spain from having recourse to violence."

After a good deal of discussion, the Cortès accepted the mediation of the English, in June, 1811. But nothing came of the arrangement; for the Spaniards continued to send out expeditions to the colonies, greatly to the detriment of the Peninsula, and in spite of all the protests of Henry Wellesley, the English minister at Cadiz.

Another source of embarrassment, which threatened at one time to result in civil war, was the hatred between the Portuguese and the Spaniards. But that which more than all the rest rendered the situation of the English general one of difficulty and danger, was the influence which the parties of the Souzas and of the Bishop of Oporto exercised in Lisbon. These restless men sometimes stirred up the populace against persons suspected of being favourable to the government, sometimes endeavoured to calm them down by opposing themselves to the rigorous but just demands of the English general. Him, indeed, they detested, because they knew that he was opposed to the pretensions of the hidalgos, and quite determined to pay no attention to their miserable demands. Emboldened by the ascendency which they exercised over the regency and over a prince easily misled, they thwarted all Wellington's proceedings by pretending to mistake the meaning of his orders, or else by a thousand absurd tergiversations evaded the execution of them. They were desirous of placing the Duke of Brunswick at the head of the Portuguese army; indeed, things were carried so far, that in the beginning of 1811 the regency and the Souza faction had organised an anti-English party. "A plot was even formed," says Napier, "to drive the English from Portugal, and, but for the vigilance of

Mr. Stuart, and the firmness of Lord Wellington, it is probable that the design would have been accomplished."* The gravest disorders were committed without an attempt on the part of the regency to repress them. English soldiers were daily insulted at Lisbon, some were even assassinated in the execution of their duty, and the perpetrators of the crime escaped unpunished. No measures were adopted to put down the refractory, and men were maintained in places of authority who refused to pay obedience to proclamations. Meanwhile, the Portuguese army died of hunger, and was destitute of the most ordinary means of transport. The fortresses were not provisioned in proper time, and, finally, the bishop, making himself the organ of the Souza faction, dared to say, at a public meeting of the regency, that he would not permit Wellington to make requisitions and impose new burdens on the people, for the sole purpose of nourishing the war in the heart of the kingdom.

The commander-in-chief complained bitterly of this state of things. He was especially indignant at the observations of the ambitious prelate, who sought to dictate to him a system of warfare; indeed he authorised Stuart to read to the assembled court of regency a letter, in which he expressed his dissatisfaction in the most severe terms. Maddened by this plain speaking, the bishop insulted the English envoy, and expressed himself concerning the commander-in-chief in language by no means apostolic. To put an end to these wretched intrigues, Wellington wrote to M. Forjas, the Portuguese Minister at War, "I beg of you to inform your

* See Letter of Lord Wellington to Mr. Charles Stuart, 5th June, 1811.

government that I will not remain in this country; and that I shall advise the British Government to withdraw the assistance which His Majesty has given to Spain." A month afterwards he addressed to Mr. Stuart a letter expressive of the same sentiments: "I pray you to inform the regency," says he, "and, above all, the principal Souza, that His Majesty and the Prince Regent having intrusted to me the command of their armies, and the exclusive conduct of military affairs, I will not permit any person to interfere with them. I know well enough where to place my troops, and how to make them take up a position against the enemy; and nothing which they can say will induce me to change the plan which I have adopted after mature consideration. Not upon them, but upon me, rests the responsibility of this proceeding. The only things which I ask of the Portuguese regency are, that they will keep Lisbon quiet, and supply their own troops with provisions so long as they serve in this part of Portugal."

So great was the destitution of the Portuguese army, that in the interval between the months of April and December, upwards of 10,000 men deserted; not reckoning the militia and the Ordinanzas, who abandoned their colours in still greater numbers. Indeed, the whole of the regular troops would have melted away, had not their more urgent wants been supplied from the English magazines.

Desirous of keeping the war on the frontier, the regency had neglected to enforce the devastation of the line of retreat; to withdraw the inhabitants, to remove the provisions, and to destroy the corn-mills. They hoped, by this culpable inattention, to cast upon the English authorities all the odium of the rigorous

measures which had been prescribed. But Wellington defeated that intrigue by avowing himself, in his proclamations, the author of the much censured plan of campaign, and by reproaching the regency with pursuing a line of conduct at once disloyal and contrary to the interests and dignity of the country. It is past dispute that if his orders had been strictly executed, Massena could not have remained ten days before the lines of Torres Vedras; that his retreat would have been disastrous, and that the provisions consumed by his troops would have sufficed to feed the Portuguese encamped about Lisbon.

While beset by these troubles, Wellington obtained proof that Souza had organised a regular and systematic opposition to the plans of defence arranged for the allied army. Justly indignant at this treason, he appealed to the Prince Regent, who put an end for a time to intrigue by pronouncing his displeasure at the conduct of the Principal, and conferring upon the commander-in-chief more extensive powers. Wellington, acting on the authority received, weeded out from the regency several of the bishop's partisans, and nominated in their room Admiral Berkeley, with other supporters of English influence. Still, more than once during that ceaseless struggle, when he saw his efforts paralysed — his devotion misunderstood — his intentions calumniated — his very talents disputed by idle talkers — his government ready to abandon him — his officers dissatisfied — his troops in rags, — more than once he thought of withdrawing from an arena where there appeared to be not the slightest prospect of success. But his confidence in the valour of the British army — in the patriotism of the Portuguese nation — in the excellency of his cause

— and perhaps, also, in the sufficiency of his own talents, caused him, on each occasion, to abandon the idea, and gave him courage to maintain his post in defiance of the storm that howled around him.

There were two dangers which at that moment threatened Wellington, — the coming up of strong reinforcements either from France or from Andalusia, and the recall of his own army. This latter peril, however at one moment serious, and always menacing, gave him less uneasiness than the other. In order, therefore, to guard against the chance that Soult, postponing the sieges of Cadiz and Badajoz, might advance to the support of the army of Portugal, he adopted the following measures. He urged the regency to give to the French before Cadiz as much trouble as possible, to break down all the bridges upon the Guadiana, and to reinforce Elvas, Campo Mayor, and Badajoz. No recommendations could be wiser; but we shall see, by and by, that they were very indifferently attended to.

It was a question with the English general, looking to the attitude which Massena had assumed, whether he should steadily pursue his original plan, or move out of the lines and act on the offensive. At one moment, taking into account the numerical superiority of the allied army, he informed his government that he intended to attack; but he abandoned this resolution a few days afterwards, and declared himself irrevocably for a defensive policy. The following is the substance of the argument by which he justified this determination: "I entertain no doubt, in the actual state of affairs, that I am able to beat the French army; but I shall lose many men and bring sickness among my troops, by the necessity under which I shall be laid, of exposing

them throughout several consecutive nights and days to the inclemency of the weather at this cold season. What then shall I gain by defeating Massena, as well as Soult, who will probably be compelled to move out of Andalusia? I shall succeed in delivering the northern provinces and Andalusia from the presence of the French. But, on the other hand, it is probable that the common course of events will enable us to achieve this advantage without risking the loss of a battle, which would compromise us altogether. Moreover, it is evident, from what took place after last campaign, that the evacuation of the provinces would not better our general condition; for when Castile and the north of Spain were delivered, they did not raise a single man nor make any effort to promote the common cause. If all this be true, our interest clearly requires that we should not join battle with the French army, which we should certainly be unable to drive out of the Peninsula; but that we should give as much occupation as we can to the larger portion of that army, and leave offensive operations to the guerillas. So long as the French do not threaten our means of subsistence, or the resources of the Portuguese government, or any thing else which affects our security, it is a matter of indifference to us whether they remain in Spain or in Portugal. I believe, indeed, looking to the increased difficulties which they experience to subsist themselves in the latter country, and to keep open their communications, that it is of advantage to us that they should remain where they are. Their numbers diminish from day to day; they do us no harm; we are nearer to our supplies than we have ever yet been, and all the north of Spain is open to the operations of the guerillas."

The soundness of this reasoning cannot be disputed. We may remark, besides, that the allied army, according to the opinion of its chiefs, was not, at that period, sufficiently pliable to engage, in the open country, the veteran troops of Massena; and that if it had attacked, it must have gone on without artillery, the roads being broken up and all the hills scarped. Success itself, under such circumstances, might have proved a source of embarrassment, because, by pushing back Massena upon his reinforcements, the Anglo-Portuguese army, enfeebled by the loss of its best soldiers, would have been obliged to withdraw itself from its supplies, to traverse a devastated country, and to abandon for a moment, without defence, the point which it was especially required to cover. Wellington was advised to turn the flanks of the French army; but, independently of the considerations just referred to, he had another reason for rejecting that plan, which was not without weight, viz. that the Prince of Essling, surrounded and isolated, evinced no anxiety about his communications, because there was nothing to hinder him from profiting by any manœuvre of which the consequence would be to open one or other of the roads into Lisbon.

There was but one event which Wellington had reason to apprehend by remaining upon the defensive, viz. that it would favour the junction of the armies of Andalusia and Portugal. He believed himself, however, able to withstand the whole of their accumulated strength, and had, on the other hand, taken measures to guard against the only evil which they could inflict upon him, viz. the cutting off of his supplies. His determination is therefore to be commended, of avoiding a battle of

which the gain would have been followed by small results, and the loss attended by most disastrous consequences, both material and moral. Indeed, he was in such a situation that he could risk nothing; for the slightest check might provoke an insurrection in Lisbon, and lead, perhaps, to the recall of the English troops. The minister, in fact, had no confidence in the success of the war, and though he did not venture to say so to the commander-in-chief, who scouted the idea, he freely expressed himself to this effect in communicating with others. Thus, while Wellington was on the Mondego, Lord Liverpool had given direct instructions to an officer of engineers at Lisbon, of which the commander-in-chief knew nothing, and which began in these words: "As it is probable that the army will embark in September," &c. It was a most imprudent avowal, which might have spread discouragement through the army, had not Wellington exhibited more and more of calmness and confidence, in proportion as the minister showed himself fearful and irresolute.

Meanwhile the Prince of Essling maintained his extended position between Sobral and Abrantes, till the country for many leagues in the rear was completely exhausted. Obliged at last, by the approach of winter, to provide for the subsistence and ameliorate the sanitary condition of his troops, he adopted the resolution of establishing himself in a new camp somewhat more favourably situated. Serious difficulties beset this operation, because the slightest movements of the French were observed by Wellington. But the marshal was an officer of great ability, and it perfectly succeeded.

Towards the end of October, his hospital, magazines, and all the baggage of his army were quietly removed

to Santarem. During the night of the 14th of November, the troops followed in the same direction. It was not till the sun had next day dispersed the mists which covered the plain, that the English became aware of the movement. It happened that the French were at that time embarrassed amid defiles, where they might have been attacked without the smallest risk. Yet Wellington began his pursuit with two divisions only, and, either because he was wanting in energy, or that he carried his prudential system too far, exhibited no vigour in his operations. It is certain that the Prince of Essling showed himself abler and bolder than he. "Difficulties," says an English author, "brought the talents of that warrior to light. After having withdrawn his army in admirable order, he selected a new position with as much of sagacity as of determination."* To secure himself against molestation, Massena entrenched his advanced guard at Santarem, and covered his rear by establishing a post at Punhete, with a bridge upon the Zezere. The Tagus sufficiently protected his left; and his right, open as it was to the attacks of the irregulars, he covered with his cavalry. This position, besides insuring to Massena a supply of provisions for some time, presented, in a strategic point of view, many advantages: It opened his communications with Spain by the bridge thrown over the Zezere. It facilitated the construction of a bridge upon the Tagus, and enabled him to push the siege of Abrantes without interrupting the blockade of the English lines, or throwing away any chance of resuming active operations on the first favourable opportunity.

The first impression made upon Wellington was, that

* Napier.

Massena had left only a rear-guard at Santarem, and was continuing his retreat with the rest of his army; he even made arrangements to attack that position on the 18th, but having reconnoitred it on the previous evening, and considering it too strong, he fell back upon Cartaxo, where he established his head-quarters. He has been much blamed for these proceedings, because they left the Prince of Essling quiet for many months at Santarem, and enabled the ninth corps, with numerous detachments besides, to rejoin the French army. Moreover, that army found time to intrench itself strongly, and the anxieties and sufferings of the population shut up within the lines, were prolonged. Indeed, as many as 40,000 persons are considered to have died of privations during the winter of 1810. The bishop's party, little attached at the best to the national cause, was, at the same time, encouraged. A new theme was supplied to the Whig opposition, rendered hopeful by the sickness of the king and the prospect of a regency; while the moral influence of England was diminished, because the successful issue of the war appeared more and more doubtful. Finally, there was the prospect of Soult, and the other French corps, advancing to the support of Massena and attacking the lines, or else rendering the blockade more stringent than ever.

Not one of these circumstances, not one of these dangers, was hidden from Wellington, yet he adhered to his system because he had excellent reasons for refusing to depart from it. In the first place, the state of the roads and of the rivers opposed an insuperable obstacle to any attempt upon Massena's position. "We are not able to do any thing," says Wellington, "though we believe ourselves strong enough to attack." In the

next place, the allied army, composed of the regiments of three different nations, was not yet sufficiently consolidated to venture upon military movements on a great scale. The French army, on the other hand, though inferior in numbers, consisted of troops of the same nation, and perfectly drilled; who anxiously desired a battle, in order to better their condition, now become almost insupportable. A check under such circumstances was by no means impossible, and it would have been followed by the triumph of the patriarch of Lisbon; by the overthrow of the English cabinet, already seriously embarrassed; by the advent to power of a party opposed to the Spanish war; and, finally, by the recall of the British army. Wellington knew besides that Soult was little disposed to come to the support of Massena; that the situation of the latter was growing more desperate every day, and that his definitive retreat could not long be postponed; he knew also that the lines of Torres-Vedras were capable of resisting double the force of the Prince of Essling, and that in consequence no risk would be incurred by adhering to a defensive policy.

Amid interests so varied and equally balanced as these, it was of the utmost importance that a battle, on which so much depended, should not be delivered except under the most favourable circumstances. Now, Wellington, after having examined every thing, and pondered upon every thing with his usual coolness and judgment, did not hesitate to declare, that these circumstances were not forthcoming. Less solicitous about his own glory than about the result of the enterprise, he had adopted as a maxim, never to run a needless risk. That which he could not obtain with certainty

he would not endeavour to obtain in a brilliant manner. Cool and prudent by calculation, rather than by temperament, he grew bold when audacity became a condition of success. No man ever sacrificed less than he to personal vanity, and to that chivalrous valour which too often results in glory to the combatants, in disasters to the cause or to the country which they were expected to defend.

Meanwhile Wellington did not remain idle; he entrenched himself in his cantonments at Cartaxo, and added every day to the strength of the lines of Torres Vedras. Not satisfied with these precautions, he caused a new line of defences to be thrown up on the left of the Tagus, from Aldea-Gallega, as far as Setuval, and constructed a chain of forts between Almeida and Trafaria, that he might be prepared to resist an attack by both banks of the river.

While these things were going on, General Foy returned on the 5th February to the French camp, after a journey beset by dangers. He had explained to Napoleon the distressing condition of the French army in Portugal, and had urgently pressed the chief of the staff to interfere with effect in the struggle. But neither his eloquent appeals, nor his just remarks, nor his urgent entreaties in the name of Massena, produced any effect. It was not that the Emperor considered Massena's demands as unreasonable; circumstances would not allow him to accede to them. With 80,000 men he might have terminated the Spanish war in a few months. No one was more satisfied on that point than himself; but unfortunately his policy of conquest had excited such a feeling against the Emperor, that he was obliged to make arrangements, in the anticipation

of an approaching war in the north. During the month of January, 1811, he began to superintend his mighty preparations for that struggle with Russia, which by-and-by absorbed the whole of his attention. That disastrous war, which Alexander did not desire, Napoleon might have avoided, had he shown himself less arbitrary in the question of the continental blockade. But carried away by his passions, and unable to achieve a maritime peace through Spain, he persisted in seeking for it in the north, where he found only Moscow.

Entirely occupied by that vast project, at the period of Foy's arrival in Paris, he refused to send on fresh troops to Massena. He instructed Marshal Soult, however, to move the fourth corps, supposed to be from 15,000 to 20,000 strong, upon the Tagus, that he might co-operate in the siege of Abrantes, and occupy the left bank of the river. At the same time he directed Drouet to hasten his march, and Dorsenne, who lay with the Guard at Burgos, to support Drouet's two divisions when required; while the king should push on the whole of the disposable force towards Alcantara. Besides all this he recommended Massena to establish safe communications with Madrid and Almeida; to make himself master of both banks of the river; to throw two bridges over the Zezere and retrench them; and seizing Abrantes and Alcantara, to wait the arrival of Drouet and Mortier. Then, with 80,000 men, he might attack the lines, and if he failed to carry them, he might continue the blockade, in the hope that a change of policy in England would bring about a general desire for peace.

There was more that was delusive than real in these projects. Soult, whom he had repeatedly ordered to

move across the Alentejo upon the Tagus, was not in a condition to obey that order, and appeared very little disposed, under any circumstances, to do so. The construction of many bridges upon the Tagus and the Zezere required supplies which had no existence. The Emperor was ignorant, or pretended to be ignorant, that the Prince of Essling had neither wood, nor iron, nor cartridges, nor bread; that his army had not found, in Portugal, a single piece of money; that the clothing of his chasseurs was in rags, that the soldiers lived by marauding, and that the officers, more wretched than they, had nothing to eat except what was given to them by the good-will of their inferiors. As to the promised succours, they were of far less importance than Napoleon desired to represent them. General Drouet, professing to obey the Emperor's orders, had left one of his divisions (Claparède's), between Viseu and Almeida, to protect his communications; and advanced towards the Tagus with that of Conroux, about 7000 men, which were joined shortly afterwards by 2000 combatants under Gardanne. These 9000 men, destitute of money, provisions, and ammunition, made up the whole of the reinforcements which Massena received. He had still, indeed, some hope of being succoured by Soult, but that hope grew less and less promising every day.

The receipt of the Emperor's orders compelled the marshal, whose forces, after the arrival of Drouet, amounted to 55,000 men, to attempt the passage of the river. The operation had become extremely difficult, in consequence of the arrival of Hill's corps, under the walls of Abrantes. It was, besides, dangerous for an army so weak to maintain itself upon both banks of the Tagus, with only a single bridge of communication be-

tween its parts. On the other hand, however, it was necessary to penetrate into the Alentejo, in order to find subsistence for the troops. For a long time the question was agitated, whether the bridge should be established at Punhete, or Santarem. Reynier preferred the latter town, because close to it, and opposite to the heights of Bonavista, there was an island on which a lodgment might be made. But General Eblé objected that he had not strength enough to convey the equipage thither, and that it would be too dangerous to send it by water, exposed to the fire of the enemy. Perplexed by this diversity of opinion, Massena determined to defer the operation till the arrival of the fifth corps, believing that the English no longer occupied the ground opposite to Punhete.

The Emperor's definitive instructions did not reach the Duke of Dalmatia till the end of December. They directed him to suspend all his operations, except the siege of Cadiz, and to direct the fifth corps, with the siege train, upon Abrantes. This was to demand of Marshal Soult that he should render his own work abortive, in order to secure the success of a rival. He pointed out to the minister of war that the fifth corps would be destroyed, between the English, who were in front of it, and Romana's 15,000 or 20,000 Spaniards, who would follow it up; and that it must necessarily leave behind it five strong places, viz. Badajoz, Olivença, Elvas, Campo Mayor, and Albuquerque. This reasoning appeared to him sufficiently strong for not carrying strictly into effect the order received. At the same time, not daring entirely to infringe it, he consented to carry the fifth corps towards the Guadiana and lay siege to Badajoz.

After having spent a whole month in collecting the siege train necessary for this operation, Soult quitted the neighbourhood of Cadiz on the 21st of December. The circumstance was communicated to Wellington on the 29th, at Cartaxo. Soult began his offensive operations on the 5th of January, with 16,000 infantry, 4000 cavalry, and 50 pieces of cannon. This little army moved in succession upon Merida, Olivença, and Badajoz. The first of these places made no defence, and the second, being in a wretched state, surrendered on the 22nd of January, after ten days of open trenches. Its garrison consisted of 4160 Spaniards, and its armament of 18 guns only.

Badajoz presented greater difficulties; yet there was nothing to prevent his pressing the siege and gaining thereby precious time. Instead of adopting this course, Soult contented himself with making three attacks, which led to nothing because they were feebly sustained. Fortunately for him, the Spanish generals, Ballesteros and Mendezabal, neglected all the precautions which Wellington had advised them to adopt in order to impede the investment of the place, and the passage of the Guadiana and the Gebora. Mendezabal not only forgot to fortify the bridge across the latter stream, but committed the additional mistake of breaking it down and of destroying the fords, by which he might have attacked the French while engaged in the passage of the Guadiana. During the twelve days in which he remained inactive, he neither pushed an advanced-guard to his own front nor took any steps to fortify his camp at Santa Engracia, which very little pains would have rendered formidable.

Profiting by this negligence, Soult, at daybreak on

the 19th, crossed the Guadiana and the Gebora, which runs at the very foot of the height where the Spanish camp had been established. A complete surprise followed, which was greatly favoured by a dense mist. Mortier, who directed the movement, formed his line of battle with great rapidity. At eight o'clock, when the mist had dispersed, the left of the Spaniards was already enveloped by the French cavalry. In the centre the troops of all arms fell into confusion; and, on the right, there remained but a single battalion for the defence of San Christoval. The French army advanced in columns, covered by its artillery; six battalions in the centre, Gerard upon the right, Latour Maubourg on the left. These forces, estimated at 9000 men, attacked 15,000 Spaniards with such intrepidity, that by ten o'clock the affair was ended. Mendezabal left upon the field of battle 900 dead, 6 standards, 17 guns, 20 ammunition waggons, and 5200 prisoners. The loss of the French did not exceed 400 men; 3000 fugitives threw themselves into Badajoz.

The place was from that moment open to be invested on the right of the Guadiana; and if Soult had chosen to profit by the circumstance and push the siege vigorously, Badajoz might certainly have fallen before the 1st of March. But he thought it judicious to proceed slowly and by regular approaches, as if there had been no urgency in the general state of affairs; yet at this very time Massena was beginning his preparations for retreat, while a strong corps of English and Portuguese was preparing to march from the Tagus for the relief of the town.

Both facts were communicated to the governor, Don José de Imar, by General Leith; nevertheless, though

the breach was not yet practicable, though his magazines were filled with ammunition and provisions, though the garrison consisted of nearly 9000 men, whilst Soult's force, reduced by sickness, scarcely amounted to 11,600 combatants, he had the baseness to surrender on the 11th of March.

Badajoz having fallen, Mortier immediately moved upon Campo Mayor, while Latour Maubourg advanced upon Albuquerque and Valencia d'Alcantara, of which he made himself master without difficulty. Meanwhile Marshal Soult himself, having learned that the English were making preparations to raise the siege of Cadiz, returned to his province, where his presence was urgently required. But the expedition had already failed, having been undertaken fifteen days too late.

With respect again to Wellington, he was no sooner made acquainted with the defeat of Mendezabal than he made preparations to resume the offensive as soon as reinforcements should arrive, hoping that now at length both the inundations and the roads might be passable; and at the same time he urged the governor of Badajoz to hold out as long as possible. His plan was to attack the French army in front from the direction of Treves, while Beresford, crossing the river at Abrantes, should fall upon their rear.

The situation of Massena, all this while, was becoming more and more desperate every day. His provisions were so completely exhausted, that towards the end of February it became necessary to employ two-thirds of the army in searching for them far and wide. Such, indeed, was the exhaustion of the country, that the few inhabitants who remained were reduced to live upon roots, acorns, and herbs. "Many of the soldiers,"

wrote the marshal, "are shod with raw hides. There is nothing to eat; the straw is entirely consumed, and the horses, for more than a month, have been turned out to graze." Sickness and suffering had greatly diminished the effective strength of the army, and, by a system of marauding, regularly organised during five months past, the bands of discipline were wholly relaxed. Finally, the chiefs, dissatisfied one with another, added greatly to the complication of affairs by their constant mutual recriminations.

These various circumstances combined to determine the Prince of Essling on effecting a retreat upon Coimbra, and establishing himself behind the Mondego. It was the line which the Emperor himself had pointed out as that from which, in the month of September, after the harvest should have been gathered in, a new expedition against the English might be undertaken with the armies of Portugal, of the south, and of the centre.

It is somewhat surprising, notwithstanding the desperate situation of the French around Santarem, that Massena, after holding his ground so long, should have come to the determination of retreating at the very moment when he had a right to count upon prompt assistance from Soult. But this was probably the result of that fatal rivalry which prevailed amongst the French marshals, and which, though constantly exposing them to censure, defied correction. Not one of them would co-operate in promoting the views of his rival, or appeal to him for assistance, however mischievous the consequences might be to the Emperor's service. It is worthy of remark, also, that the army of Portugal, now reduced to 40,000 combatants (for Drouet's 9000 men were in cantonments, at Leyria, and could not be considered as

belonging to it), was in no plight to maintain its extended position against the attack which Wellington was preparing. Napier, indeed, considers that this was the reason which mainly determined the Prince of Essling to withdraw, and he justifies his opinion by observing, that the order to retreat was not issued till the hidalgos had informed the French staff of the arrival of reinforcements from Great Britain. Be this as it may, these reinforcements, which, after a passage of six weeks, disembarked on the 2nd of March, did not join Wellington's army till the 5th, at the close of which day the Prince of Essling had issued orders to retire. He had already, on the previous evening, sent away his sick and heavy baggage, under the pretext of thereby facilitating his concentration at Punhete, the point where it was supposed that the French army would pass the Tagus. His real design, as we have seen, was to cross the Mondego at Coimbra, and, passing through an unexhausted country, to reach Oporto, in the neighbourhood of which he could wait till Soult's operation should have withdrawn the English army to another point, or till the arrival of Bessières, with the army of the north, should enable him to resume the offensive. No doubt it was the best arrangement which he could adopt; but, in order to effect it, it would be necessary to change his front by countermarch in the presence of an enemy superior in numbers, who commanded his pivot as well as the debouches of his main line of retreat by the Leyria road, and who, at the other extremity of the line, near Abrantes, had a bridge by means of which they could advance in the direction of Ourem and Thomar. If Wellington should succeed in reaching Leyria before Massena, the French army would be obliged to accept a

doubtful battle, or else to turn away from Coimbra and enter upon the unsatisfactory route of Espinhal.

In order to attain this difficult object, the Prince of Essling adopted the following expedients. He manœuvred so as to induce the belief that he wished to cross the Tagus at Punhete, or else to retire behind the Zezere, in order to gain Castelbranco. All the boats were assembled at the point indicated, and preparations were made in order to effect a passage. As soon as the enemy took note of these preparations, the second corps doubled back at eight in the evening of the 5th, from Santarem to Thomar and Espinhal, and the eighth, from Tremes and Alcanhade to Pernes. Ney at the same time took post with the sixth corps at Leyria, so as to check the enemy in the direction of Liz, and to threaten Torres Vedras. By these skilful movements the Prince of Essling deceived Wellington, and succeeded in getting the start of him by several marches. On the 7th, Regnier was at Thomar, Junot at Ourem, Ney at Leyria, and Loison at Punhete, where he waited till evening in order to set fire to the wonderful, but useless, bridge equipage of General Eblé. By the 8th, the whole army was out of danger.

Too prudent rashly to uncover his lines, Wellington did not begin the pursuit till he had fully satisfied himself as to the enemy's intentions. On the 6th, however, he had patrolled towards them, and he wrote the same day from Santarem to General Leith, governor of Elvas, begging him to inform the commandant of Badajoz that Massena was retiring, and that the place would soon be relieved. Indeed, the promised succours began their march on the 8th, as soon as it was ascertained that the enemy was in full retreat.

Junot had pushed on to occupy Coimbra and the Mondego. Drouet received orders to support Marshal Ney, while he, put in charge of the rear-guard, was instructed to hold fast at Pombal and Redinha.

The rear-guard had its first affair with Wellington at Pombal on the 11th. If it had been a little stronger, and Drouet in better humour, the English army would have found greater difficulty in dislodging it; but, in the absence of this support, Ney could offer very little resistance. Better things might and ought to have been expected from the Duke of Elchingen. But if the author of the memoir of Massena is to be believed, Ney was of opinion, from the commencement of the retreat, that it would be well to reach Spain by the shortest attainable rout. This opinion, with the determination of Drouet to consider himself independent of the orders of the Prince of Essling, exercised a mischievous influence over all the operations of the French army.

Coimbra was the point which the two armies were alike anxious to reach, and, on the 12th, they were but three hours' march apart from each other; Ney, with 6000 infantry, supported by a few squadrons and light guns, occupied a rising ground in front of the village of Redinha. He had received the English troops with such steadiness, that Wellington believed the post to be occupied in force, and spent in consequence three hours arranging a well-supported general attack in the hope of surprising the passage of the defile of Redinha. A cannon shot from the English ranks gave the signal for battle, and in a few moments 30,000 men, pouring out from the woody heights, drew up upon the plains in three lines, and advanced in the full assurance of

victory. The cavalry and artillery charged the French battalions, who received them with a general volley, the smoke of which entirely concealed them. When the smoke cleared away, the battalions had disappeared. Ney traversed at their head the village of Redinha, while his artillery and part of his troops checked the advance of the English. He rejoined Massena at Condeixa without sustaining any loss; it was a brilliant feat of arms.

On the 13th, the Prince of Essling found himself with his back against the defiles which overhang Coimbra. He had charged Montbrun to push on and take possession of that town; but finding there Trante's little corps, which had destroyed the bridges and put the village in a state of defence, Montbrun came to the conclusion that he was confronted by the English reinforcement which had landed at Lisbon on the 2nd. He communicated this opinion to Massena, who did not hesitate, on such vague intelligence, to change his line of retreat, and to move upon the extremely bad road which leads to Murcelha.

Such, in few words, is the story told by Napier, and accepted by Thibaudeau, by the authors of the "Victories and Conquests," and by General Pelet. The author of the "Memoirs of Massena" explains the episode differently; and we are inclined to believe that his opinion, based upon the marshal's correspondence, is the more credible of the two. He alleges that Montbrun, on his arrival at Coimbra on the 11th, found only one arch of the bridge broken down, and that Colonel Valazé, of the engineers, after examining the river on the 12th, demanded thirty-six hours for establishing a safe passage opposite Pereira. The consequence was, that Massena

charged Ney to maintain himself as long as possible in front of Redinha. The Duke of Elchingen disputed the ground from six in the morning till noon; but a little later fell back without any reason behind Redinha, accomplishing thereby the object of the attack which Wellington had arranged for four in the afternoon.

There remained after this but one mode of obtaining possession of Coimbra, namely, by prolonging the defence of Condeixa; if that defence should fail, it would be necessary to retire upon Alva.

As a measure of precaution, Massena sent away, on the night of the 12th, his wounded and baggage by the Miranda-de-Corvo road. The behaviour of Ney on the following day, fully justified that measure. Seeing his left threatened by Picton's column, the Duke of Elchingen believed the rear-guard to be in danger; and, after a trifling demonstration, retreated for two hours, at the very time when the commander-in-chief was taking measures to counteract Picton's movement. "With this fact before him," says General Koch, "Massena at last understood what heretofore he had been unwilling to suspect, that all the manœuvres of his lieutenant, since they quitted Pombal, had for their object to prevent the possibility of establishing the army behind the Mondego."

Montbrun found himself completely isolated by Ney's precipitate movement, yet he was so fortunate as to rejoin the army, which from that moment had no other resource left than to push for Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, by roads at once dangerous and rugged.

The day following, turned to much better account by the French rear-guard, proved that Ney, when he chose to take the trouble, was a tactician of the first order.

Heretofore Wellington had exhibited less talent and determination than his adversaries; now, in spite of the remarkable skill with which the French rear-guard was handled, he was about to exhibit a decided superiority in both respects.

The army of Portugal retired in good order through the narrow belt which is enclosed between the mountains and the Mondego, where it no longer found provisions, or inhabitants, or supplies of any kind. As it went on, it destroyed its baggage, its ammunition, its horses, and the guns which impeded its progress. Whatever strong positions were met with by the way it obstinately defended. But Wellington, by well-combined flank movements and vigorous attacks, made himself master of these positions with a force inferior in number, and sometimes, by threatening the defiles in rear of his columns, compelled the enemy to abandon them without opposition. We may take, as a remarkable example of this state of things, the affair of the 15th, against the strong position of Foz d'Arunce.

Wellington having observed that Ney had left part of his troops, two divisions, on this side the Ceira, surprised and surrounded them while they were retreating in confusion towards the bridge. It was between four and five in the afternoon. The marshal rallied the fugitives, threw himself upon the bridge, and assumed in his turn the offensive, with such effect as to compel the English to retire. Unfortunately, the French, misled by the darkness, fired upon one another, which greatly augmented their loss. During the night Massena fell back behind the Alva, while Ney maintained himself on the left bank of the Ceira till the whole of the baggage was safe. He then caused a part of the bridge to be broken

down, sent the main body of the rear-guard on before him, and remained with a weak detachment upon the right bank. That firm countenance saved the army.

So ended the first part of the retreat. "In spite of all Massena's precautions," says Lord Londonderry, "the French army would have been totally destroyed had their provisions and ammunition kept pace with the allied troops. But on the 16th Wellington found himself destitute, and a halt of several days became necessary. The waters of the Ceira, besides, had greatly swollen, and it was no longer fordable."

Thwarted in his intention of establishing himself at Coimbra behind the Mondego, Massena was desirous of halting for a while in rear of the Alva, beside the bridge of Murcelha; but the position, besides that it was liable to be turned, required for its defence a supply of provisions, which were not to be had. On the other hand, General Reynier, who had been directed to cover Ney's left, withdrew to a distance in order to exist, and had scattered his troops among the villages. Hence, deceived in all his calculations, Massena was compelled to continue his march upon Celerico and Guarda, which he reached on the 21st.

While waiting the arrival of provisions from Lisbon, Wellington concentrated his force on the 19th near the Sierra di Boita. Here many despatches from his own government reached him, filled with complaints on account of the expense which his system of war rendered necessary. These missives were drawn up in such a bitter tone, that they appeared to announce the speedy recall of the army.

During the leisure which was afforded to the Allies by the halt of Massena at Santarem, some distinguished

officers, and, among others, Fane and Crawfurd, had returned, under various pretexts, to England. There they strenuously opposed themselves to Lord Wellington's friends, and urged the minister (already pressed by a powerful party in the House of Commons) to put an end to a ruinous war, of which the success was by no means certain. Lord Wellington and his brother, the Marquis of Wellesley, combated the arguments of these officers with clever articles in the Tory newspapers.* Nevertheless, the minister was so completely bent on recalling the army, if the French should remain much longer in Portugal, that before quitting the lines in pursuit of the enemy, Wellington gave orders for the embarkation of his baggage, and renewed that order on the 30th of March, in a letter addressed to Admiral Berkeley from Celerico. These circumstances, of which Massena could not be entirely ignorant, account for the mortification which he experienced in being obliged to abandon the line of the Mondego, and for his desire to remain, at all hazards, in Portugal.

The retreat of the French army, as far as the Guarda, was marked by a course of burning and devastation which the necessities of war could not justify. Torres Novas, Thomar, and Pernes, were sacked. Leyria, and the convent of Alcobaca, the Westminster Abbey of Portugal, became a prey to the flames, and in the district of Coimbra upwards of 3000 persons were put to death by an exasperated soldiery. "This retreat," says Wellington, "is marked by a barbarity which has seldom

* I have not considered it necessary to efface this statement; though every person who knew the Duke of Wellington at all knows, that if there was one act from which, more than all others, he shrank, it was writing in or to a newspaper.

been equalled, never surpassed." The spirit of vengeance alone could instigate to similar acts of cruelty and vandalism.

The English general foresaw that such would be the consequence of a French invasion when, in answer to Massena's proclamations, which declared "that he entertained no hostile feeling except towards the English," he induced the Portuguese nation to disregard such language, and to seek its safety in a determined resistance. At the same time, it is just to acknowledge that the Prince of Essling more than once exerted himself to put a stop to the barbarous proceedings of the men and officers under his command. At Leyria, among other places, he enjoined the generals to bring all plunderers to trial. "Day by day," he says, "the soldier robs and plunders without troubling himself about the moral effect which such conduct produces upon the spirit of the Portuguese nation. As we approach Lisbon, we must become more and more rigorous," &c. In a circular, dated Santarem, he takes a still sterner tone: "I understand," says he, "that the soldiers detached to search for provisions are guilty of the most wanton excesses. The inhabitants, who have already furnished all the supplies in their power, or whom their want hinders from furnishing them, become victims of their barbarism. It will make you shudder to learn that they have hung up several of these unfortunates. The honour of the Emperor's army, and the generosity of the French character, equally revolt against such atrocities. If we do not exert ourselves to repress them, we shall become execrated by all civilised nations." The burning of Condeixa, commanded by the Duke of Elchingen, to cover his retreat, called forth a new pro-

test from the commander-in-chief. "That act of incendiarism," he wrote to the marshal, "involves us in new difficulties, for the system which we seem to have adopted cannot fail to render the French army universally hated."

It is satisfactory to be able to cite these facts, because they do honour to the Prince of Essling, whom a regard to impartiality will not permit us to treat at all times as exempt from reproach; and who, in this war, had the misfortune to be little favoured by success. The fortune of the empire was indeed evidently beginning to decline in the person of the illustrious hero of Rivoli, Zurich, and of Essling. Fortunately, this warning of Providence was not understood; and the disaster of Moscow proved, by and by, to Napoleon, that he had been unjust in attributing to the errors of his lieutenant a check which resulted mainly from a policy devoid of foresight and rash in the extreme.

Having reached its first base, the French army received directions to march from Guarda and Belmontes upon Corea and Alcantara, in order to establish a communication with Soult on the other side of the Tagus, and through the valley of the Tagus with Joseph. The historian of "The Consulate and the Empire" asserts, that the marshal intended to re-open the campaign immediately, upon a different plan. "There remained to him still," says M. Thiers, "without reckoning Drouet's corps, 40,000 men. But such a scheme was exacting too much from the army, and still more from its chiefs. The moment the orders were issued, they drew forth violent criticisms from all quarters." And no wonder; for to renew the invasion of Portugal with 40,000 men, destitute of bridge equipment, and without any hope of

being supported by Soult, would have been to attempt an impossibility. Ney's corps, cantoned about Celerico, in a barren and exhausted country, was the most dissatisfied of the whole. The marshal wrote to Massena that he found it impossible to feed his troops, that they would not be better off in Estremadura, that it was absolutely necessary to return to the Coa, that a new campaign upon the Tagus could lead to nothing, and that, at all events, the flank march proposed by the commander-in-chief was "an arrangement quite impracticable," and calculated only to bring total ruin upon their affairs in Spain. Ney demanded the production of the Emperor's orders, and declared that without this guarantee he should look upon himself as obliged to disobey. A sharp discussion ensued between the two marshals, and it resulted in the removal of Ney from his command, and the appointment of General Loison to succeed him. This unfortunate change of leaders was not without its effect upon the operations of the rear-guard, heretofore so brilliant; and rendered the task of the English general much more easy.

The insubordination of the Duke of Elchingen, which he carried so far as to commence his retreat towards Almeida, prevented Massena from marching at once upon Elga. His next hope was, that with the help of the army of the south, he might be able to maintain himself at Guarda; and he therefore opened a communication with the king and with Soult. But on receiving by and by more accurate information as to the exhausted state of Estremadura, and ascertaining that Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida were so poorly provisioned that neither of them could hold out against a month's blockade; being satisfied also that his own troops were

as adverse as ever to the idea of a fresh campaign, he abandoned his project, which, in point of fact, offered at the moment not a chance of success. Besides, the sudden appearance of Wellington, who, in the course of the 29th, crossed the Guarda mountains with his columns, utterly confounded him. Almost without firing a shot, the French army withdrew from its position, one of the strongest in the country, and, with a view to future operations, in the direction of Corea, or Ciudad Rodrigo, and Almeida, passed the Coa, and established itself at Sabugal. It was there that, on the 3rd of April, Wellington fought with it his last action, of which he says, with some touch of exaggeration, "This was one of the most glorious actions British troops were ever engaged in." We only know that, if glorious to one party, it was equally glorious to the other, for Reynier's troops showed themselves by no means inferior to those of the enemy.

Massena passed the frontier on the 15th, and moved towards Ciudad Rodrigo, after which, in spite of his extreme repugnance to quit the Portuguese territory, he withdrew, on the 9th of April, across the Agueda.

Such was the fate of the very best of Napoleon's generals—of him who had earned for himself the sobriquet of "the spoiled child of victory." With the loss of almost all his baggage, of a great part of his artillery, and half his troops, he found himself compelled to retire; while these same English, whom his proud master had commanded him to drive into the sea, after saving Coimbra, rendering Beira secure, and, re-establishing their own communications with the north of the Peninsula, followed him up, even to his last reserve. It was a result the more honourable to

Wellington that the Spaniards had accumulated blunder upon blunder, and treason upon treason. The regency had withdrawn Ballasteros from Estremadura at the moment when it was about to be attacked. Mendezabal had permitted himself to be destroyed on the Gebora, in spite of the warnings and advice of Wellington. The garrison of Olivenza had surrendered prematurely, and lastly, the Governor of Badajoz had been weak enough to sign a capitulation just as his prospects of a successful defence were becoming bright.

If we wish to arrive at a correct judgment of the merits of this campaign, we must take into account both the difficulties of every sort by which Massena was beset, and the circumstances which favoured the English general. The Emperor's instructions were generally imperfect, and often impracticable. The army of Portugal, too weak as regarded numbers, was deficient both in stores and in provisions. Bessières and Dorsenne, the independent governors of old Castile and Galicia, either refused support altogether when it was required of them, or exhibited culpable indifference in affording it. General Drouet, who claimed, on the strength of the special instructions conveyed to him, to be independent of the orders of Massena, was a source of embarrassment rather than of support. Soult, who ought to have made a powerful diversion in the Alentejo, did next to nothing; while Junot, Ney, Reynier, and Loison, quarrelling among themselves and dissatisfied with the commander-in-chief, presented a melancholy example to the soldier, which produced the worst effect upon his spirit and character. But, whatever might be the influence exercised by these events upon the final results of the campaign, it is certain that the Prince

of Essling appeared from the beginning to the end inferior to himself as well as to Wellington. The sole blame attaching to the latter is, that he exhibited, at the commencement of the retreat, some disposition to delay and even to hesitate in following up the French columns. Towards the end, he redeemed himself by the ability with which he handled his troops and profited by every change in the nature of the country. Seldom had he displayed greater activity and determination;—so much so, indeed, that in one of his letters he makes known this curious fact: that, being unable to prevent the departure of some of his generals, (for the powers given to him did not extend so far,) he suffered such inconvenience, that he was often obliged himself to discharge, in the same day, the duties of general of cavalry, of leader of the advanced guard, and of the commander of two or three columns of infantry.

The author of the "Memoirs of Massena," therefore, deviates widely from the truth, a fault which cannot usually be charged against him, when he says, "Massena was followed by about 100,000 of the Allies, (a gross exaggeration,) who, up to the last moment, appeared to attend him like a guard of honour. If he did not accomplish all that he desired, it was certainly not Wellington who destroyed his combinations." If the Prince of Essling had really been engaged with an enemy so timid as this, he would not have failed to turn to account one or other of the opportunities which the retreat afforded him, of destroying that imaginary guard of honour. Now, he did nothing of the sort, though threatened in consequence with the reproaches of Napoleon; a pretty good proof that he entertained a

higher opinion than General Koch of the English army, and of the chief who commanded it.

The campaign of Torres Vedras, so glorious to Wellington, offers a remarkable example of what a nation can do which shrinks from no sacrifice in order to maintain its independence. The commander-in-chief of the English army had perceived that to save Portugal he must begin by laying it waste; and this conviction he had the talent to impress upon the unfortunate inhabitants, who, not only consented to destroy the whole of their effects, but were willing to burn their houses, to which they were strongly attached, and to live like wild beasts, among the caves and woods of the southern provinces.

Colonel Jones, an eye-witness, who took an active part in the construction of the lines of Torres Vedras, has drawn for us a vivid picture of the misery of the population subsequently to the departure of the French army. After estimating the total loss of the French before the lines at not less than 27,000 men, he goes on to say: "This prodigious mortality must, in great measure, be attributed to Marshal Massena having remained in his cantonments till absolute want preyed on every part of his army, and his troops were driven to subsist on such inadequate and unwholesome food, as generated a variety of diseases. These were rendered more fatal by the neglected and unprovided state of the hospitals, and by the want of an internal police, every town and village being encumbered with disgusting accumulations of dirt and filth. The total abandonment of discipline, consequent on these peculiar situations, also added to their loss; the plea of providing subsistence being made the plea for every excess, and giving rise to

conduct which could not be narrated without exciting suspicion of inaccuracy or malignant exaggeration.

"The losses or sufferings of the French, however, were nothing in comparison with those stern visitations inflicted on Portugal and its inhabitants. Nearly 2000 square miles of country remained for five months with scarcely an inhabitant; everything it contained was devoured by the enemy, or destroyed by the season. In the space immediately bounding the positions of the two armies, not permanently occupied by either, the produce of the harvest perished, scattered over the ground, and the vintage mouldered on the stalk; flocks of innumerable small birds (starlings) drawn to the spot by instinct, fattened unmolested on the ungathered grapes; and latterly the very wolves, conscious of security, or rendered more daring by the absence of their accustomed prey, prowled about, masters of the country, reluctantly giving way to the cavalry patrols, which occasionally crossed their track."

Having spoken of the multitudes who, in obedience to Lord Wellington's proclamation, took refuge in Lisbon, after destroying all their goods, Colonel Jones continues: "Hard as their lot was, it was far more happy than that of the villagers in the rear and on the skirts of the enemy's cantonments, whose habitations, plundered of everything, afforded their owners no supplies, and only a precarious shelter. Many of these wretched creatures passed the whole season of winter, exposed to its inclemencies, in the neighbouring woods or mountains, subsisting merely on roots and herbs; and on the advance of the Allies returned to their homes, their bodies emaciated from abstinence, and their intellects impaired by long-continued apprehension. Amongst

them were girls of sixteen, who, become idiots, resembled women of fifty. Some children of both sexes, who had survived the severe trial, crawled to the roadside to supplicate relief, appearing so thin, and haggard, and pale, that many a hardened veteran was observed to turn from the sight with disgust, as he compassionately bestowed on them a portion of the biscuit provided for his next day's support."

Colonel Jones supports these statements by quoting from the narrative of a French officer, whose object in writing was to vindicate Massena's good name; but the details which he gives, besides that they revolt every feeling of moral right, are absolutely unfit, because of their atrocity, for publication. It may be fairly said, that never since wars began were horrors more fearful committed than those of which the French invaders were guilty in their dealings with the wretched Portuguese.

As to the material loss sustained by the country, some idea may be formed of that when it is remembered that on the departure of the French, enormous districts were left without a single head of cattle, or a solitary morsel of food. Towns and villages were abandoned, mills destroyed, the wine was running in the gutters, heaps of charred corn, furniture burned—not a horse, not a mule, not an ass, not a cow, not even a goat. Such is the description given by the French themselves of the condition of the country at the period of their retreat; and if we except the wine running in the gutters, it is worthy of all belief.

That he might provision Ciudad Rodrigo effectually, the Prince of Essling proceeded to reorganise his army at Salamanca; Almeida became by this means exposed,

and Wellington caused it to be invested, while he himself, with an army of observation, took post in advance of the Coa. His stay with that army was, however, brief, for Marshal Beresford had become involved in serious difficulties near Badajoz, and Wellington found it necessary to proceed thither. No great while afterwards, Massena, who had gathered in several detachments from Estremadura, and among the rest an excellent division of cavalry, received orders to attempt the relief of Almeida. He knew that Wellington was then at Badajoz, and believed that he would be able to effect his purpose before that officer's return; but he was deceived in his calculations by the unexpected difficulties which the Duke of Istria threw in his way. That marshal, who, in obedience to the Emperor's orders, ought to have co-operated in the expedition with part of the army of the north, exhibited so little zeal, that the Prince of Essling, in spite of many and pressing solicitations, failed to obtain from him more than a brigade of Watier's light cavalry, about 800 men; a detachment of the cavalry of the Guard, about 700; a battery of 6 pieces, and 30 waggons. These succours, despatched by the marshal himself, some days after the time appointed, did not reach Ciudad Rodrigo till the 30th of April, and joined the main body of the army only on the 2nd of May.

Though Wellington had determined not to incur any serious risks in order to maintain the blockade, and though in point of numbers the French cavalry were undeniably superior to that of the Allies, he accepted the battle which was offered, having perfect confidence in the valour of his troops, and desiring to maintain, at all risks, the moral ascendency which he had acquired for them.

The French army crossed the Agueda on the 2nd of May, by the bridge of Ciudad Rodrigo. Wellington stood firm. "Our ill success," says M. Thiers, "was beginning to render him bolder. The time was gone by when he shrank from accepting any other than unavoidable battles." His army occupied Fuentes d'Onoro in force, an important position, which covered the main line of communication for the English with Portugal, by the bridge of Castelbom upon the Coa. Had he lost that bridge, there would have remained for him only one means of passing the stream below Almeida, very insufficient for an army in retreat, more especially if it were closely followed.

Wellington's left rested on the old fort of Conception upon the Almeida road, and thus served to complete the blockade of that town, which had been intrusted to Pack's brigade and an English regiment, the whole under the orders of General Spencer. The centre occupied the crest of the rising grounds which overhang the Rio dos Casas to the left of Fuentes, and the right touched the boggy woods of Pozo-Belho. Beyond that wood the Spanish troops of Julian Sanchez, supported by Houston's division, held the mountain of Nave de Avel, which a space of broken ground, considered by the commander-in-chief as impracticable, separated from the Coa. The front of the position, extending over more than two leagues, was covered by the deep valley of the Dos Casas. Another stream, the Turones, with equally steep banks, ran parallel to the rear of the line of battle. Towards the right and centre, the army had but one line of retreat practicable for wheeled carriages, viz., the Castelbom road; and lastly, the Coa was in its rear, the banks of which were precipitous throughout.

Massena's first intention was to seize that road, and to push back the enemy upon the Lower Coa. With this view he caused the village of Fuentes d'Onoro to be attacked an hour before daybreak on the 3rd of May, by 3000 men, under the orders of General Ferrey, but, as might have been expected, that weak detachment was repulsed. At five o'clock, the marshal ordered a second attack, more serious, but not yet sufficiently strong, with the whole of Ferrey's division and Marchand's brigade. Warned by the first attack, Wellington was in force at the threatened point. Nevertheless, after a fierce struggle, which was prolonged far into the evening, the French succeeded in establishing themselves in the lower part of the village. At an early hour next morning, Wellington endeavoured to dislodge them, but though he could not succeed in effecting that, he occupied the upper village in such strength, that Massena found himself obliged to abandon the idea of forcing the position by an attack in front. After a close reconnaissance, therefore, the marshal determined to carry the bulk of his troops, during the night, towards the enemy's right, with the view of seizing the head of the defile of Dos Casas, beyond the wood of Pozo-Belho, and of turning the position by the low ground, which extends between that wood and the plain of Nave de Avel. This plan, which he might and ought to have executed on the 3rd, realised his first project of throwing Wellington upon the Lower Coa, and cutting him off from the Castelbom road.

Montbrun held the extreme of the left line; next to him, and in front of Pozo-Belho, were placed two divisions of the 6th corps, with one division of the 8th in reserve. These troops, intended to double up the

enemy, consisted of about 17,000 men. The lower part of Fuentes d'Onoro was held by Ferrey's division of the 6th corps, which, with the 9th placed in reserve behind it, formed the centre of the line. On the right was the 2nd corps, the first division of which leaned upon Alameda, and of which the second occupied the open space between that village and Fuentes d'Onoro.

While the right was taking up its ground, Alameda and Fuentes were to be attacked in order to effect a diversion. The plan was well conceived, but it was badly executed.

In the morning of the 5th, General Fournier's cavalry began the battle by forcing Julian Sanchez to abandon Nave de Avel and to withdraw behind the Turones. At the same moment Montbrun debouched upon the heights of Pozo-Belho, where he came upon General Houston's first line, covered by two squadrons of Hanoverian hussars, and six squadrons of Portuguese chasseurs. He charged the cavalry and dispersed it; but the fire of the English infantry, and showers of case-shot poured out by the twelve guns which supported it, soon compelled him to retire. He sent, in all haste, to ask for the guns of the artillery of the Guard. That corps, referring to a regulation of which the inconveniences had been already experienced at Wagram, replied that "it could take no orders except from Marshal Bessières." It was necessary now to apply to Massena, who sent four pieces, but not till after an interval of three quarters of an hour. That delay produced fatal consequences; it arrested the offensive movement which Marchand's division of Loison's corps had begun at Pozo-Belho upon Houston's

left, and enabled Wellington to bring up Cotton's cavalry to the support of his right.

Meanwhile Montbrun, having received some guns, fiercely attacked the English division, which retired behind the Turones with some loss, but without being broken; thanks to the support given to it by Crawfurd's light division, the well-directed fire of which stopped the new efforts of the French general. Crawfurd formed his division into three squares, which he supported with a strong force of cavalry and fifteen pieces of cannon. In front of that line there was a party of the foot-guards, under Colonel Hill; these troops were cut to pieces, and the greater part of the men, as well as their commanding officer, fell into the hands of the French. Montbrun was proceeding to follow up this bold stroke, when the intensity of the iron shower, and the arrival of the whole of the English cavalry, compelled him to retreat, and to wait for the cavalry of the Guard, and for the support of the infantry, which he had earnestly demanded.*

* [In the first edition of his work, Captain Brialmont, misled by the assertions of M. Thiers and others, stated that two out of the three squares into which the Light Division was formed, were broken by Montbrun's cavalry.

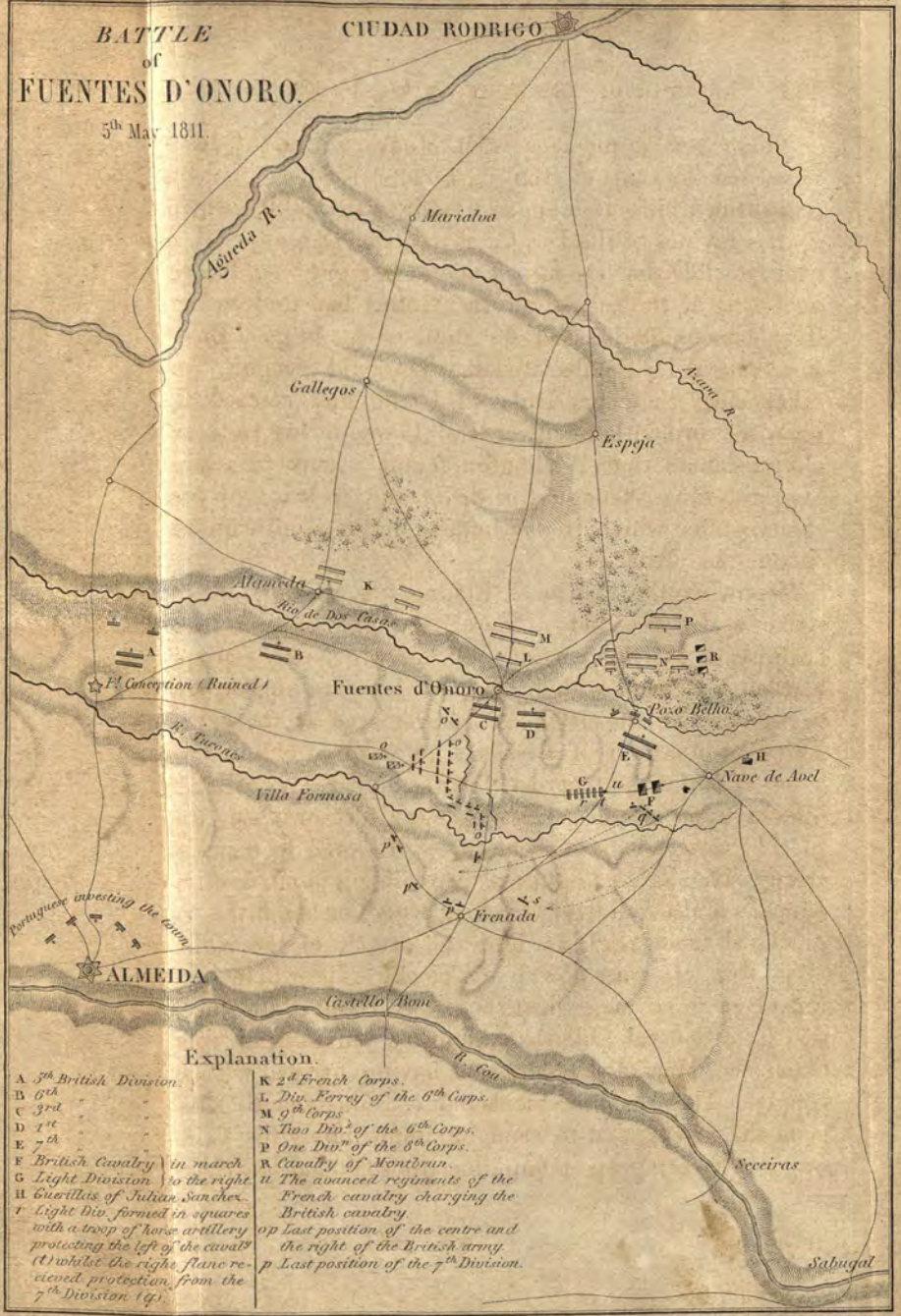
In his new edition he corrects this error, — the testimony of eye-witnesses having satisfied him that he had been misled. And he deserves the more credit for thus yielding to the force of truth, that the whole weight of French authority seemed to confirm his original statement. General Pilet, Massena's first aide-de-camp, Marshal Bessières, and Jourdan, all speak of English squares broken; and Napoleon, who was not prone to reward his Peninsular officers, gave a step of promotion to the commandant of the regiment which was described as performing this feat. The real truth, as the text gives it, is this,— the only squares broken were two small rallying squares of skirmishers, who could not get into their places in sufficient time. The total number cut to pieces scarcely exceeded thirty men.]

There was a moment when Montbrun might have possessed himself of the Castelbom road, if Loison had thrown himself in good time into the defile formed by the ravines of the Dos Casas and the Turones. It is even possible that the attack upon the right would have succeeded if the cavalry of the Guard had undertaken it. Massena had asked for these troops in good time, but General Le Pic declared that he could recognise no other chief than the Duke of Istria, and refused to draw a sword without his orders. It was owing to these circumstances that Wellington found leisure to retire his right wing through the defile and to bring up his reserve, after which it was impossible for Montbrun to resume the offensive.

Meanwhile the Prince of Essling was taking steps to strike a decisive blow. Perceiving that Loison, too faithful to the instructions of the previous evening, had left Montbrun without support, he gave him orders to oblique to the left. A courier was at the same time sent in search of Bessières, in order to obtain the co-operation of the Guard. Reynier and Ferrey, whose attacks upon Alameda and Fuentes d'Onoro had, up to this moment, been feeble, were directed to make a strong diversion against these two villages; and, finally, Massena himself, quitting Fuentes, where he had hitherto remained, made ready to lead the attack of the right in person. It was now five o'clock. The whole line was about to advance when the prince received information from General Eblé that the men's ammunition was exhausted, Marshal Bessières not having arrived with a supply. This announcement induced Massena to suspend the attack, and to send off immediately his field waggons to bring up ammunition from Ciudad Rodrigo.

BATTLE of FUENTES D'ONORO.

5th May 1811.



Explanation.

A 5th British Division.
B 6th " "
C 3rd " "
D 1st " "
E 7th " "
F British Cavalry } in march
G Light Division } to the right
H Guerillas of Julian Sanchez.
I Light Div.n formed in squares with a troop of horse artillery protecting the left of the cavalry (t) whilst the right flank received protection from the 7th Division (q).

K 2d French Corps.
L Div.n Ferrey of the 6th Corps.
M 9th Corps.
N Two Div.ns of the 6th Corps.
P One Div.n of the 8th Corps.
R Cavalry of Montbrun.
u The avanced regiments of the French cavalry charging the British cavalry.
op Last position of the centre and the right of the British army.
p Last position of the 7th Division.

While waiting their return, the troops bivouacked upon the field of battle and consumed the provisions which were intended for Almeida.

In spite of the fatigue which his army had undergone, Wellington employed the whole night in throwing up intrenchments at Fuentes, and between that village and Villa Formosa. That circumstance, together with the ill-temper of the generals, induced many officers to dissuade Massena from risking another battle. The prince yielded to their solicitations, and took steps for retreating, as soon as his orders for the demolition of Almeida should be carried into effect.

The battle of Fuentes d'Onoro, including the losses between the 3rd and the 5th, cost the Allies 235 men killed, 1234 wounded, and 317 prisoners. The French lost 308 killed, 2147 wounded, and 210 prisoners. Though the action was indecisive, so far that the two armies retained their positions, and that the lower part of the village of Fuentes was not occupied by either, still the general result was, upon the whole, favourable to Wellington.

On the evening of the 6th, before commencing his retrograde movement, the Prince of Essling sent orders to the garrison of Almeida to open a passage for themselves with arms in their hands, after blowing up the works of the place. There was no backwardness in adopting this resolution, because the place was destitute of provisions, and could not be held any longer. In the night between the 10th and the 11th, General Brennier exploded his mines, and immediately afterwards sallied out at the head of 1400 men. General Campbell, who had charge of the blockade, took his measures badly; the left of his line and the banks of the Agueda were feebly

guarded. Brennier's column was thus enabled to open a way for itself across the enemy's picquets, and to reach the bridge of Barca de Puerco, where the 2nd corps was drawn up to receive it. The junction did not, however, take place without a contest. Just as he reached the bridge, the rear of his column was attacked by six English battalions, who caused him to suffer considerable loss. In his report to the Duke of Ragusa, Brennier calculates his own casualties at 360 men, of whom 150 were killed. Campbell's troops had only 4 killed, 16 wounded, and a few missing. "Massena," says an English author*, "congratulated himself on Brennier's exploit, while Wellington was deeply mortified." The dissatisfaction of the latter was exhibited in two letters, which, on the 15th of May, he addressed to Lord Liverpool. Indeed, we may remark, once for all, that every operation which he did not superintend in person seems to have been conducted carelessly and turned out badly.

Napier asserts that the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro manifests a greater amount of error than of talent, on both sides. Lieut.-General Pelet, in a note inserted in the twenty-first volume of "The Victories and Conquests," arrives at the same conclusion, only he expresses his criticism in terms that are unjust to the commander of the English army. "Lord Wellington," he says, "ought to have rested the right of his army upon the defile, and formed his line along the ravine; and this the more readily, that he was warned by the attack of the 3rd, and the movements which took place throughout the morning of the 5th. If, then, Wellington had known how to fight battles, he could have fully restored

* Lord Londonderry.

the day by debouching upon our centre, or, better still, by sending his beaten cavalry to take its revenge upon General Reynier, who had not quitted Alameda. As soon as we heard of an attack upon him, we must have thought seriously of our line of retreat upon Ciudad Rodrigo. The great numerical superiority of the English general would have enabled him to attempt anything, but he showed himself in this campaign, as well as in others, very little acquainted either with strategy or tactics."

We could oppose to this intemperate testimony that of General Jomini, and other distinguished writers; but the facts stated above are sufficient to prove that Wellington handled his troops with greater ability than the Prince of Essling, and, above all, exhibited more coolness at the decisive moment of the battle, though all the chances were against him. The sole blame which attaches to him is this, that he accepted the battle with too weak an army and in too extended a position; having in his rear the fortress of Almeida, still in possession of the enemy, and the Coa, of which the precipitous banks were very dangerous in case of a hasty retreat. Thus the general who is represented in France to have been a model of caution and circumspection, exposed himself over and over again to be fairly blamed for his rashness.

The Marquis of Londonderry accuses Massena of having lost, at Fuentes d'Onoro, a good opportunity of defeating the allied army. "He ought to have thrown his cavalry," says he, "upon the right flank of the enemy, passed the Coa, advanced upon the English lines of communication, seized their convoys, and while his infantry threatened to turn them, to have pushed upon

Sabugal and the neighbouring villages, with a view to compel Wellington to pass the Coa with his artillery under the most unfavourable circumstances, and to cut off his safest retreat. There was great apprehension lest the Prince of Essling would adopt these measures, and this it was which made the Duke hesitate between abandoning Sabugal and raising the blockade of Almeida. His presence of mind, however, never forsook him for a moment. Having perfect confidence in his soldiers, he preferred giving up a favourable line of retreat to abandoning an operation of which the success was neither doubtful nor far distant. Hence it was that he determined on leaving Sabugal to its fate, rather than open to the enemy a communication with Almeida; a bold resolution, but not taken without grave reflection, and justified in the end by complete success."

We are bound, however, as faithful historians, to confess that Massena was badly supported in the day of battle. The Imperial Guard refused to obey his orders. Loison, knowing that he was superseded by the Duke of Ragusa, manifested little zeal, and his troops, who regretted their old chief, were, besides, ill disposed towards him. Count d'Erlon, being on the point of rejoining Soult, saved the 9th corps too much; and Reynier, who hoped and applied to be put in command of a separate corps, did no more than he could avoid.

These various circumstances account for the disjointed and feeble nature of the French attacks. They would have served as an excuse for the Prince of Essling if the Emperor had been less under the influence of mortification and anger; but, misled by the rapid and easy success of the campaign of Somosierra, he imagined that a very moderate amount of talent and energy would suffice

to subdue Spain and drive the English into the sea. Hence his anger with Soult and his unjust resentment towards Massena. That illustrious warrior, who had rendered him so many services, and who, at the commencement of the enterprise, had been the object of so much kindness and flattery, was harshly criticised and superseded in his command by the Duke of Ragusa.

So ends the career of the Prince of Essling and the glorious period of the empire. The sword was again to be drawn, yet no more under the pressure of necessity; no more with the feeling of duty to the nation, but at the suggestion of blind passion, unreflecting and criminal. From the retirement into which ingratitude had driven him, the victor of Zurich was by-and-by permitted to see the noble armies of France, which he had so often led to victory, beaten and driven back by hordes of barbarians into the heart of their own country. If he had been a bad citizen, that day would have signally avenged his self-love, wounded as it was by unjust reproaches and unmerited disgrace.

CHAP. X.

BERESFORD LAYS SIEGE TO BADAJOZ. — ADVANCE OF SOULT. — THE SIEGE IS RAISED. — BATTLE OF ALBUERA. — THE SIEGE IS RESUMED UNDER WELLINGTON. — IT FAILS. — CONCENTRATION OF SOULT AND MARMONT.—THE ALLIED ARMY FALLS BACK UPON THE CAYA. — MOVES TO THE NORTH AND TAKES CIUDAD RODRIGO. — VAIN ATTEMPT OF MARMONT TO SUCCOUR THE PLACE. — SECOND SIEGE OF BADAJOZ. — ADMIRABLE CONDUCT OF THE ENGLISH TROOPS IN THE ASSAULT. — OUTRAGES AND PLUNDER AFTERWARDS. — SOULT, WHO HAD MOVED TO RELIEVE THE PLACE, FALLS BACK. — REVIEW OF THE SIEGES OF BADAJOZ AND CIUDAD RODRIGO. — INACTION OF THE SPANISH ARMY. — PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN OF 1812.

THE battle of Fuentes d'Onoro would have been decisive had not the retreat of Ballasteros compelled Wellington to detach Beresford into Estremadura in order to cover the right flank of his army. The commander-in-chief arrived at this determination during the night of the 13th of April, after receiving intelligence of the surrender of Badajoz. On the 16th, the day subsequent to the affair of Foz d'Arunce, Beresford put himself in march with 20,000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and 18 pieces of cannon.

Wellington has been blamed for thus dividing his army, by which he was exposed in case of an attack to a serious check. Indeed, twice during the progress of the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro fortune was on the point of betraying him. But it would have been equally a

fault to leave the Duke of Dalmatia to follow up at his leisure the advantages which the capture of Badajoz had given him. Still, upon the whole, the balance was in favour of exposing himself to this latter damage rather than that he should incur the risk of sustaining a disaster in the neighbourhood of Almeida.*

Having reached Campo Mayor on the 25th of April, Beresford, in conformity with his instructions, was desirous of passing the Guadiana, investing Badajoz, and retaking Olivenza. But the Spaniards had neglected, in spite of Wellington's repeated solicitations, to send on the bridge of boats from Badajoz to Elvas. Unfortunately it was the only bridge of the kind which the Allies possessed, and if Beresford had found it where it ought to have been, he might have commenced the blockade on the 26th. Now, as at this date the breach was still open, the ditches not cleared out, and the magazines unprovided, it is probable that he might have taken the place without difficulty, thus sparing the English army the loss which it sustained in the bloody battle of Albuera and in the subsequent sieges.

To supply the place of pontoons the English engineers constructed trestles by means of which they established a bridge upon the Jurumenha, which was completed only on the 3rd of April. The Guadiana would have been passed at dawn on the following day, but that during the night a sudden rise of three feet

* It is fair to observe, that Wellington was not obliged to fight at all, and that in all probability he would not have fought the battle of Fuentes, had he not felt himself strong enough to fight it successfully. His two corps, though separated, were in a condition to reunite before the enemy could concentrate; and their retreat to Lisbon, the proper base of their operations, was always safe.

rendered the bridge useless. Another flood having occurred on the 4th, the army was reduced to the necessity of passing the river upon rafts. This operation began on the 5th, and was continued without interruption during the 6th, 7th, and 8th.

On the first of these days, Beresford had established his head-quarters in a little village on the left bank. The enemy carried that village on the following night, after having surprised a piquet of cavalry; but being attacked almost immediately afterwards by the English infantry, they were obliged to abandon the prize. Meanwhile the French had filled up the trenches before Badajoz and partially closed the breach, provisioned the place, and mounted the siege artillery. As the allies drew near, Mortier, who had been directed to watch and defend the approaches to the position, retired with his corps to Seville, leaving a garrison in the town and a detachment of 400 men at Olivenza. With a little more vigilance he could have easily opposed the passage of the Guadiana, because that river was not fordable for infantry, and the only two bridges in existence, those of Merida and Badajoz, were in the hands of the French. Moreover, the Allies were destitute of bridge equipment, and had no other resource than pieces of green wood, too slight to enable them to raise their trestles above the reach of the water in the event of sudden floods.

Leaving a division before Olivenza, Beresford moved upon Zafra and thence to Elvas, where, in the course of the 21st, he was rejoined by Wellington. On the following day the two generals closely reconnoitred Badajoz, with a view to arrange a plan of attack; for Wellington was desirous of carrying the place in five

or six days, a space of time within which he considered it impossible that Soult could arrive to the support of the garrison.

The most distinguished officers of the English army recommended that the approaches should be made against one of the southern fronts; but that plan, however reasonable under ordinary circumstances, was open to the objection that it required too much time. It was necessary, therefore, to have recourse to another. The chief engineer accordingly proposed, 1st, to breach fort St. Christoval, and to establish three batteries, the plunging fire from which would hinder the enemy from constructing in the castle a retrenchment capable of a good defence. 2nd, to open on the very night in which the fort should be assaulted a parallel upon the plain in front of the castle, and to throw up, under cover of that parallel, a battery intended to breach the castle walls at a distance of from 450 to 500 rods. The commander-in-chief assented to this project, but, having ascertained soon afterwards that Massena had concentrated his forces with a view to raise the siege of Almeida, he returned to the army of the north, leaving to Beresford the direction of the siege, and transmitting to him detailed instructions in the event of the arrival of Marshal Soult to succour the place.

Before following the Duke to this new theatre we shall describe briefly the events which occurred, after his departure, under the walls of Badajoz.

During the night of the 23rd of April, the Guadiana rose to the height of seven feet, and carried away the bridge of boats, interrupting thereby Beresford's communications with Portugal. On the 29th the passage was reopened by means of a flying bridge, and, on

the 1st of May, a bridge of boats was established. General Philippon had profited by these delays to improve the defences of Badajoz and to lay in a fresh stock of provisions.

The place was invested towards the south on the 4th of May, and on the other side of the river upon the 8th. The trenches were opened the same day, and the advances pushed on with as much activity as the unsatisfactory circumstances in which the besieging army found itself would allow. So early as the 6th of April, Lord Wellington had given orders to forward from Lisbon to Elvas a large quantity of stores of every kind; but such was the exhausted state of the country, that the means of necessary transport could not be found. The engineers' stores for the attack of St. Christoval were insufficient. The artillery amounted to only 3 brass 24 pounders, provided with 300 cartridges each, and 2 8-inch howitzers, having 200 charges only. Finally, the besieging force consisted of one English brigade, two Portuguese battalions, and a battalion of militia, amounting in all to about 4000 men.

The breaching battery against Fort Saint Christoval opened its fire about four in the morning of the 11th; but being served by Portuguese recruits, it produced no effect. Indeed, in the course of the day, it was silenced by a battery thrown up in the interior of the castle. From that moment the attack languished for want of material and troops. The works on the left bank of the river did not advance more rapidly. The trenches were opened before the castle in the night between the 12th and 13th; but scarcely had the workmen placed themselves under cover, when Marshal Beresford or-

dered all the preparations to be made for raising the siege; intelligence having arrived that Soult, now some days in march to succour the place, was already in the occupation of Llerena. During the 13th and 14th the batteries were disarmed, and all the stores which could not be removed were burned. A part of the army moved upon Valverde, while the fourth division, with some Spanish detachments, remained upon the left bank of the river to cover these latter operations. On the 15th, at nightfall, this division also put itself in march, and the siege was completely raised. The loss of the besieging army amounted to 100 killed and 650 wounded or prisoners.

Meanwhile Soult having united his troops to those of the fifth corps, under the provisional orders of Girard, approached with 15,000 infantry, 3000 cavalry, and 40 guns. Beresford resolved to await his coming, and to give him battle upon a good position in advance of the place; he therefore repaired to Valverde, in order to confer with Generals Blake and Castaños, who assured him of their support.

All these measures having been taken, the allied army quitted Badajoz at five o'clock in the evening of the 15th, and proceeded to Albuera, where it formed a junction during the night with the Spanish troops, and where, next day, after the battle had raged some time, it was joined by the fourth division under General Cole.*

* According to Napier, Blake arrived at three in the morning of the 16th; Cole at nine, after the battle was begun; Kemp's brigade and Madden's cavalry never came up at all. The arrangements of concentration were badly made, and it was by mere chance that the Allies found themselves in sufficient force to defend the position of Albuera. [This is strictly true:—for the fourth division was far

Beresford's entire strength amounted on this occasion to 32,000 men, of whom 7000 were English and about 10,000 Portuguese. The cavalry can scarcely be reckoned at 2000 in this effective force; the artillery numbered only 38 pieces. The Spaniards occupied the right of the position. Stewart's division was in the centre, Hamilton's Portuguese division was on the left, and Cole's division, with a Portuguese brigade, was in second line, in rear of the middle of the front of battle.† The cavalry protected the right flank of the Spaniards, and a light brigade, under Alten, held the village of Albuera. Blake's troops were worn down by fatigue, and reduced by famine to eat some of their own horses; a great many soldiers had passed over to the enemy some days before the battle, in order to escape starvation. Their organisation was so defective, and their discipline so relaxed, that no one could think of moving them in the open plain before an enemy. Lastly, their chief lacked courage, and, to crown the misfortune, he was not on speaking terms with Beresford.

The position of Albuera was good in itself, only it had been injudiciously taken up. Upon the high ground on the right, entirely denuded of troops, "it would have been wise," as Wellington has well expressed it, "to throw up some field works." In any case, it would have

in the rear when the sound of firing reached it; and the famous Fusilier brigade came up, just in time to recover the high ground from which the Allies had been driven, and to save the day. Its advance was in echelons of battalions, which opened fire upon the French while they were in the act of deploying — charged, and drove them off the field.]

† [Cole's division came up along the main road, and therefore entered into the battle as here described. But it was not posted there previously to the commencement of the action.]

been prudent to intrust the defence of that post which covered the road to Valverde, to troops more steady than those of Blake.

If Soult had pushed direct upon Albuera, instead of taking the road to Villa Franca, he might have fallen upon the Allies on the 15th, before their army was concentrated. This circumstance alone points out how rash Beresford was in accepting the battle. For even if he had been certain, which he was not, of uniting his forces at the decisive moment, all the chances in the beginning of the affair were against him. Prudence counselled him to delay, and, if need were, to repass the Guadiana, that he might wait for the reinforcements which he had a right to expect, after the results of the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro became known. His troops, it is true, jealous of the success of the army of the north, eagerly demanded a battle; but a general should know how to resist such solicitations when the public interest requires. Unfortunately Beresford, though an able man, and remarkable for his personal courage, did not possess the qualities necessary for independent command. If we may believe some English writers, he had but little hold upon the affections of his soldiers, who regretted the loss of their excellent and much esteemed chief, General Hill, whom severe illness detained at a distance from the army.

At nine A.M. on the morning of the 16th, Soult directed Girard's corps against the right of the Allies, while Godinot advanced upon the bridge of Albuera to force a passage there. The cavalry, under the orders of Latour Maubourg, marched in the interval between these two columns, ready to support either according as circumstances might render necessary. The artillery,

with the exception of one battery, supported the attack of the fifth corps. Soult hoped that by forcing the enemy's right he should be able to seize the Olivenza road; to throw back the Anglo-Portuguese army upon the bayonets of the garrison of Badajoz, and to hinder the junction of the Spaniards, whom he believed still to be in the rear.

As soon as Beresford perceived the object of this movement, he entreated Blake to change his front. But either through unfriendly feeling, or because he was afraid of throwing his ranks into confusion, the Spanish general refused to obey, and was accordingly attacked under very unfavourable circumstances. His troops, in spite of the personal courage which they displayed, were not able to stop the French columns for one moment.

This first reverse sufficed to place the Allies in a very critical position. Fortunately, General Stewart advanced his brigade with great promptitude to meet the enemy, and succeeded in holding his ground long enough to allow Houghton's brigade to come up. Nevertheless, though supported by Dixon's artillery and Lumley's dragoons, these two brigades were compelled, in the end, to retire before the brilliant charges of the French cavalry.

It was now close upon one o'clock, and victory was about to declare for the French. Already Beresford was making his preparations for retreat, when Colonel Hardinge, Quarter-Master-General of the Portuguese army, took upon himself to order the advance of Cole's division, which was just coming upon the ground. This happy inspiration changed the fate of the day. The intrepid Cole, with the Fusilier brigade, commanded by

Meyers, with Harvey's Portuguese brigade, and a battalion of the Lusitanian Legion, advanced upon Houghton's right, while Beresford moved Abercrombie's brigade upon the left. This decisive attack afforded the British infantry an opportunity of exhibiting the steadiness and courage which distinguish it in every emergency. Keeping clear of the confused mass which covered the plain, it debouched upon the head of the French columns, too deep and dense to act with vigour, and charged them with a degree of regularity, coolness, and audacity beyond all praise. In vain Soult addressed his soldiers and stimulated them by his example; in vain all his energies were exerted. Nothing could stop that formidable infantry; neither the efforts of so able a chief, nor the bravery of the veterans whom he commanded, nor the charges of his furious cavalry, nor the murderous fire from the heads of the columns, nor the iron hail from the artillery concentrated upon that weak corps.

It was to no purpose that the reserves endeavoured to maintain the combat; the black masses of French infantry staggered, turned, got confused, and fled. A mighty cheer was heard, when the smoke clearing away, there were seen in the middle of the plain 1500 brave men, all that remained of 6000, before whom an army, which a few instants previously believed itself to be on the eve of victory, fled in disorder. "Modern history," writes General Picton, "presents no example of an action so obstinately disputed."

The battle had been so fiercely contested, that the 57th English regiment, out of an effective of 570 men, lost 23 officers and upwards of 400 soldiers. Meyers' and Houghton's brigades, which had entered the field

each 1400 strong, were reduced, at two o'clock, when the firing ceased, to 400 combatants. "7000 bodies," says an English general, "occupied the space of a few hundred feet, and our artillery when advancing, towards the close of the day, were compelled to pass over them, deaf to their cries, and averting their gaze from the brave fellows thus laid prostrate in the dust."*

The authors of "The Victories and Conquests" assert that "this disastrous affair exercised a great and unhappy influence upon the *morale* of the French soldiers, and that these old warriors, ever victorious in the north, and so often successful in Spain, never again approached the English without a certain amount of distrust."

Soult's failure may be attributed to two causes. In the first place, Godinot's advance was so tardy that Girard attacked under unfavourable circumstances; in the next place, the French columns were too dense, and too near one another to deploy, and could make no answer to the terrible fire of the English, nor save themselves from the ravages of the artillery. The system of deep masses, so often adopted by French generals, occasioned here the same disasters which marked in after times the formidable attacks of the imperial troops at Borodino and at Belle Alliance. Wellington never fell into this error, against which he was careful to warn his lieutenants, and which modern tacticians have not always avoided.

Beresford, who had shown himself a brave soldier, though an indifferent general, during the battle, recovered his energy and coolness after the victory, and maintained himself in the position of Albuera. Soult

* Lord Londonderry.

ought to have attacked him there again on the morrow; but he did not, and lost by that means an excellent opportunity of destroying his enemy, of barring against him the passage of the river, and of carrying to the south of the Tagus a corps numerous enough to excite consternation in England. Instead of pursuing this purpose, to which every thing invited him, the Duke of Dalmatia retired on the 18th upon Solano, to await there the succours which were coming up from Andalusia. It is probable that the countenance assumed by Beresford led him to suppose that the allied army had received reinforcements, for otherwise the conduct of the marshal, under the circumstances, admits of no explanation.

Wellington arrived on the 19th at Elvas, followed by two divisions; he gave immediate orders to Beresford to follow the enemy with caution, and the same day caused Hamilton's Portuguese brigade to invest Badajoz.

When Soult found himself obliged by the dispositions of the Allies to continue his retreat, he changed its direction, and marched upon Llerena, which offered him many resources, an excellent position, and a country favourable to the action of his cavalry. He halted there either in expectation of Drouet's division, which was promised to him on the 8th of June, or till an opportunity of resuming the offensive should present itself. It was there that he received intelligence of an important decision, at which the Duke of Ragusa, Massena's successor in the command of the army of Portugal, had arrived. Although the Emperor had directed Marmont not to make any movement whatever till 60 pieces of cannon fully equipped should have reached him, the Duke of Ragusa, with a view to save

Badajoz, established himself upon the Tagus, and began his movement on the 3rd of June, with only 36 pieces. The receipt of this intelligence induced Soult to hold his ground at Llerena, where he had nothing to fear from Wellington, for it was of much greater consequence to the Allies to make themselves masters of Badajoz, previously to the junction of the French armies, than to attack the Duke of Dalmatia in a formidable position, whence he could retire with perfect safety upon Seville or Cadiz.

The campaign of 1810 freed Portugal, yet, apart from that result, it must be acknowledged that the general condition of the French in the Peninsula was better after that campaign, than it had been at the close of the preceding year. Soult occupied the whole of Andalusia, except Cadiz and Gibraltar. Suchet, by the capture of Tortosa and Tarragona, had taken a wide step towards the complete conquest of Catalonia; and, finally, the opposition of the Castilians, heretofore so determined, appeared to have given way to sentiments altogether different. The Emperor, who watched from afar and with extreme solicitude the affairs of Spain, believed the circumstances favourable for making another great effort upon Estremadura, and for "driving," at last, according to his favourite expression, "the English into the sea." He was extremely anxious to effect that object before entering upon the Russian campaign, the preparations for which already occupied the whole of his attention. The thing was not impossible had great sacrifices been made, but come what might, Napoleon hoped that so much time might be gained as would enable him, after destroying the Russians, to undertake in person the direction of the armies in Spain. Doubt-

less it would have been more judicious to defer the colossal expedition to the north, and to terminate the war of the Peninsula, which would have led as certainly, and with fewer sacrifices and less risk, to a general peace, as the gigantic invasion of the Muscovite empire. But *this man of destiny*, blinded by his brilliant and rapid successes, had reached a period in his career when, from one delusion to another, by blunder after blunder, and catastrophe after catastrophe, he was about to precipitate himself, and France with him, into the most deplorable abyss.

While Napoleon was superintending his vast preparations for the coming war, Wellington was considering how he might hasten the deliverance of the Peninsula by taking advantage of the difficulties to which that war would subject the French empire. The moment was well chosen, and he felt, besides, that he could attempt any thing with the troops which had beaten the veterans of Soult and Massena. But, before striking the decisive blow, it was necessary, in order to secure the communications of the Allies with Portugal, to take possession of Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo. Wellington, therefore, moved the bulk of his forces upon the Guadiana, leaving at Sabugal only 18,000 men, under Spencer, to keep Marmont in check.

And here begins that series of famous sieges, in which the valour of the English troops obtained results which were the more remarkable, that it was not seconded either by the appliances, or the rules of order, with which the illustrious Vauban has endowed the art of the engineer. The officers of engineers, who are the souls of operations of this kind, were too few in the English army, and, generally speaking, had received but an im-

perfect practical education. During half a century England had not conducted more than three sieges worthy of the name. These were, the siege of Louisburg, at Cape Breton, in 1758; of the castle of Belleisle, in 1761; and of Havana, in 1762. It is not, therefore, surprising that their first attempts upon fortified places in the Peninsula, should have been conducted with so little skill. Indeed, they exhibited not only great ignorance in the details of execution, but a certain lack of ability and of science, over and above, in the general arrangements. Colonel Jones, of the engineers, confesses, with a frankness worthy of all praise, that his comrades were scarcely more advanced in the art of taking towns, than they might have been in the times of Philip the Second. "The practice of attacking places," he says, "by breaching from a great distance, and then running all risks by trusting to the bravery of the troops, much more than to works of approach, was generally prevalent in the English army. This method had done well enough in colonial wars, where we were in some degree compelled to adopt it, because the insalubrity of the climate threatened to be more disastrous than a check. The journals of the sieges in the Low Countries, under the Duke of Alba and the Prince of Parma, are, so to speak, the journals of the sieges in Spain. We find there almost a literal description of our attacks; the besiegers, after having effected a breach with their distant batteries, march to the assault exposed to the full fire of the place, and are repulsed or succeed in making a lodgment in the breach, only after the most unheard-of acts of valour."

Colonel Jones, however, does not consider the engineer officers as responsible for the adoption of this

faulty method of attack. He treats it as the effect of the following causes:—1st, the want of engineer troops (trained sappers and miners) and *matériel;* 2nd, the inadequacy of resources in men, artillery, and siege *matériel;* 3rd, the ignorance of the officers and soldiers of the line, of the art of attacking places. It is certain that Wellington complained continually of the inadequate supply afforded to him in the *personnel* and *matériel* necessary for siege operations, but that his complaints in this respect proved unavailing. It was, besides, an old grievance, from the mischievous consequences of which all English generals had suffered. Thus, in 1793, the Duke of York found himself, from lack of *matériel,* incapable of forming the sieges of Valenciennes and Dunkirk: and, in 1808, General Dalrymple, according to Colonel Jones, consented to sign the convention of Cintra because he could not, without much loss of time and a great sacrifice of men, make himself master of Elvas and Almeida.

This state of things did improve; indeed, not till the end of the war, Wellington was obliged to undertake sieges without an engineer's park, without sappers and miners, without suitable tools, without mortars, and without grenades. In order to make his approaches he was obliged to employ soldiers of the line, who had no knowledge, even in theory, of the work to which they were set, and performed it with unconquerable repugnance. Hence there could be rarely got out of them one-half the amount of work which the troops of any other nation would have performed in the same time. It became necessary, therefore, at the risk of sustaining loss and vexatious delay, to refrain from pushing saps up to the foot of the ramparts, and to adopt a method

which, in an artistic point of view, was a positive anachronism. Infantry soldiers were employed to push the approaches so near to the place that breaching batteries might be established in them against the enceinte. The scarp, once beaten down by these batteries, the troops emerged from the trenches and advanced to the assault, rushing over open spaces, sometimes of considerable extent. They lost, by this means, the benefit of being under cover, at the moment when the enemy's fire became most murderous; and what added still more to their danger, was this, that they could receive no protection from their own batteries, which were too far removed, or so constructed as to render it impossible for them to fire without hitting the column of attack. Finally, when the assailants, in spite of the fire of the place, arrived in good order at the edge of the ditch, they were met by the counterscarp, from forty to sixty feet high, which they could not pass except by breaking their ranks. It was, therefore, as skirmishers, rather than as a dense column, that they threw themselves upon the breach, and hence they were generally repulsed.

Another cause of weakness was the inadequacy, in numbers, of the workmen. "It was more than once necessary," says an English engineer, "to employ three nights in clearing out a trench, which might have been easily effected in one, and that because the French force in the field required a considerable army of observation to watch it. Moreover, if there had been trained workmen enough, the want of fascines and gabions would have still rendered it difficult to push the siege works nearer to the places attacked. On many occasions the workmen furnished by the corps could not be em-

ployed for lack of a sufficient quantity of trenching tools." *

On the other hand, the artillery was not always of a suitable kind or calibre; there were no mortars, and the siege park was destitute of shells as well as of grenades. The consequence was, that the practice of the French gunners, who had nothing to apprehend from a vertical fire, was, for the most part, better than that of the English. We may venture to assert, without fear of contradiction, that if Wellington had been engaged, in Spain, against places regularly fortified upon the systems of Vauban or Cormontaigne, he would have found himself unable to reduce one of them.

The French historians, who utterly condemn the sieges undertaken by the English armies in the Peninsula, take no account of these insurmountable difficulties. In an artistic point of view, these sieges offer, without doubt, few features worthy of notice; yet we cannot but admire them as examples of what courage and perseverance can effect, when opposed by adverse fortune and the vices of a backward military organisation. Wellington took great pains to get rid of some of these defects, yet he was not always fortunate in his first attacks of fortresses. The siege of Badajoz will supply us with an example.

In order to insure the success of that operation, it was necessary to begin by driving back Marshal Soult behind the mountains. The arrival in the neighbourhood of the Duke of Ragusa, however, rendered that impossible. Indeed, it was with difficulty that Wellington could remain long enough to carry the

* Jones' Journal of Sieges.

place by pushing on his works with the greatest vigour. He determined, therefore, to follow, in the main, the plan of attack in which Beresford had been interrupted, avoiding, however, the details which, in their execution, had proved to be defective.

The place having been invested on the 25th of May, and the passage of the Guadiana made good by means of a flying bridge, he was able, in the course of the 29th, to open his trenches against Fort St. Christoval. Unfortunately the resources of the English army were not equal to so difficult an undertaking. The siege train, the same which Beresford had used, was in a bad state; the guns, of which some were of the date of Philip II., were mostly too small; the round-shot did not fit; there was not a single mortar in the park; the Portuguese artillerymen lacked experience; while the English gunners were too few; sappers and miners there were none; and there was a sad scarcity of engineer officers; and, lastly, time had not been afforded for the troops of the line to make fascines and gabions. "Thanks to the negligence of the English government," says Napier, "no army ever undertook an operation of the sort so little provided with the means necessary to its accomplishment."

The batteries opened their fire on Fort St. Christoval in the course of the 3rd of June; but, by the mere shock of the explosion, piece after piece was dismounted. Nevertheless, the breach appeared practicable on the 6th, and at night the first assault was delivered. It failed, because the troops, on reaching the foot of the escarpe, discovered that the rubbish had been cleared away. The fire was renewed with seven guns and two howitzers, which still proved serviceable, and, on the 9th, a new

breach was declared practicable. A second attempt was made during the night, but on this, as on the former occasion, the foot of the wall was found to be cleared, and the column of attack, arrested by that obstacle, was shot down, and repulsed with loss.

In the morning of the 10th, there was brought in to the English head-quarters an intercepted despatch from the Duke of Dalmatia to the Duke of Ragusa, which announced that the whole of the French forces would soon be concentrated in Estremadura. This information, together with other intelligence received at the same time, decided Wellington on raising the siege, and leaving before the place only troops enough to maintain the blockade. Besides, it would have been impossible for him to continue the fire two days longer, except by emptying the magazines at Elvas, and his artillery was reduced to nine serviceable pieces on the side of Fort St. Christoval, with twelve which directed their fire against the castle.

During the night of the 10th, the magazine and park began to be quietly withdrawn; and, on the 12th, the siege was raised; after costing the Allies, in killed, wounded, and missing, 34 officers, and 451 soldiers.

The operations of this siege are severely criticised by French authors; yet, putting out of view certain mistakes in the execution of orders, the failure of the attacks must be attributed to the absence of all means necessary to insure success. "From the commander-in-chief down to the private soldier," says Colonel Jones, "every man did his duty, and the unfortunate result ought not to bring discredit on the plan of attack." We are quite of this opinion.

Certain critics, who take into account neither the

means employed nor the brief period, which could alone be reckoned upon, between the commencement of the works and the arrival of the French army, have attributed the repulse of the Allies to the following causes:—

1st. The inexperience of the engineer corps, as well as that of the commander-in-chief, who had never, till then, conducted any other sieges than those in India.

2nd. The defective choice of the points of attack.

3rd. The mistake of having no counter batteries opposed to the fire of the besieged.

4th. The absence of mortars from the siege park, and the faulty disposition of the siege batteries, which were at too great a distance for bad guns to produce any effect.

5th. Because no use was made of the sap in the last approaches.

6th and last. Because the assault was given before crowning the glacis and properly preparing the foot of the breach.

Without desiring to enter into a discussion respecting the value of these criticisms, we would merely ask of those who dispense them, whether it would have been possible to execute all the works pointed out by them, with the materials at the disposal of the English engineers? The Duke could hardly have done better than he did, under the circumstances in which he found himself, and for this very reason he would, perhaps, have acted wisely if he had attempted nothing.

It was ascertained on the 14th, at the head-quarters of the Allies, that Marmont was at Truxillo and could be joined by Soult in the course of three or four days. This intelligence determined Wellington to raise the

blockade and to retreat. He halted, however, for some time at Albuera, in the hope of being able to attack the army of Andalusia by itself; but this hope having been dispelled by an able manœuvre of Soult (who, constantly refusing his left, filed by his right upon Almendralejos), the allied army crossed the Guadiana during the 17th, and took the road to Olivenza and Campo Mayor. General Jomini affirms that Wellington ought to have marched by Campo Mayor upon Albuquerque, heading Marmont, and to have concerted his operations with Spencer's corps, which, from Almeida downwards, had not ceased closely to observe the army of the Duke of Ragusa. This would, in fact, have given him the opportunity of beating the marshals in detail, and of repeating what Buonaparte had done, in analogous circumstances, at Castiglione.

The English general took post on both banks of the Caya, and determined, in spite of the numerical superiority of the enemy, to accept battle. It was a bold inspiration, for he could scarcely, at that moment, bring into line a force in infantry and artillery equal to three-fourths, and in cavalry to one-half, of the effective troops in the corresponding branches of the French army. The ground, besides, was little broken, and therefore favourable to the action of cavalry; in addition to which, the Portuguese army was reduced by famine, sickness, and desertion, to 14,000 combatants. Finally, the fortresses in possession of the Allies were in a miserable condition. Wellington, however, had upon his side the potent auxiliary of moral strength. His bold attitude deceived the French as to his real condition, and made them believe that he had been joined by the Spanish troops. Under this persuasion they manœuvred, during

the whole of the 24th, in front of the Allies, though they had at their disposal an army of more than 50,000 men, which, in the opinion of M. Thiers, "was without its equal in Europe, with the single exception of Marshal Davoust's corps."

After this useless demonstration Soult retired into Andalusia, happy in having saved Badajoz, and Marmont returned to the Tagus, well pleased to escape the necessity of fighting under the orders of a rival, towards whom he entertained an incurable dislike. Thus, through the errors of its chiefs, the French army lost a new opportunity of conquering the Peninsula while it destroyed the British forces. It would have been a great error on the part of Wellington to have afforded this opportunity, had he not been deeply interested in preventing the fall of Elvas and Jerumenha, and in repairing and revictualling the other fortresses in rear of his line of operations. Besides, it was necessary to silence, by a bold attitude, not only the English opposition, which put a false construction on all his actions, but his own army, which augured little good for the future, and the Cabinet of London, ever ready to abandon an enterprise of the ultimate success of which it continued to entertain small hope. The situation of Wellington had seldom been more critical.

With a view to withdraw Soult, Wellington directed General Blake to attack Seville with 10,000 or 12,000 Spaniards, whom he had no wish to admit into his camp. The arsenals and magazines of that place were indispensable for maintaining the blockade of Cadiz, and Blake might have easily reduced its weak garrison if he had hastened to invest it, instead of throwing away precious time before the fortress of Niebla. But while

he was vainly endeavouring to make himself master of that fort, without either breaching cannon or shells, the Duke of Dalmatia crossed the Sierra Morena and marched to the relief of Seville. Blake had barely time to defile by Ayamonte and to embark for Cadiz.

About the same period Ballasteros was obliged to take ship at Camelas, and the renewed pacification of Andalusia became complete.

It was subsequently to these events that the Duke of Ragusa, in order to cover Madrid and place himself in communication with the armies of the north and of the south, proceeded to establish himself upon the Tagus, between Talavera and Alcantara, occupying Truxillo, Placentia, and the defiles of Banos. The position was, in every point of view, a convenient one, and Marmont was justified in taking it up, contrary to the advice of Soult, who was desirous of drawing the army of Portugal within the radius of his ordinary operations, by intrusting to it the protection of Badajoz.

Having selected Almaraz as the centre of his communications, the Duke of Ragusa applied himself to construct, at that point, a double *tête de pont* for the defence of the river.

Meanwhile Wellington, fortunate in having a second time saved Portugal, put the main body of his troops into cantonments at Castello de Vida, Marvao, and other places adjoining the Tagus. Yet the English army did not remain long inactive. In order to cover Galicia and hinder General Abadia from being attacked by the army of the north, and to secure, at the same time, greater facilities of subsistence, it moved, in July, upon Beira, with the view of laying siege to Ciudad Rodrigo. Unaware that the French army had received

considerable reinforcements, and judging, from the intelligence communicated to him, that the provisions in the town were well nigh exhausted, Wellington hoped to render himself master of that place before the Duke of Ragusa could make any serious attempt to relieve it. But, to insure the success of the plan, it was necessary that the enemy should be deceived, and this the English general effected with great address.

He began by embarking openly, at Lisbon, a siege equipment and a reinforcement of artillery which had lately arrived from England. The flotilla told off to transport it set sail in the direction of Cadiz, but, when well out at sea, the artillery was transferred to smaller vessels, which took their course towards Oporto, while the larger ships sailed on towards Cadiz and Gibraltar. The siege equipment ascended the Douro as far as Lamego, where it was landed; and then it became necessary to drag it by oxen, an extremely difficult operation, because the roads in front of Celerico are detestable, passing as they do over high mountains, and because the utmost pains were required to keep the movement concealed from the French.

Thanks to Wellington's able arrangements, the transport of the siege equipment was effected with perfect success. The Allies then quitted the Caya on the 21st of July, and crossed the Tagus at Villa Velha, for the apparent purpose of finding better cantonments, but, in reality, with a view to surprise Ciudad Rodrigo. At this moment Galicia was in the greatest danger. Torn by factions, and left, so to speak, without defence, it was menaced by General Dorsenne, who hoped to make himself master of it without difficulty. The march of the Allies upon the Coa, fortunately stopped this inva-

sion, of which the consequences would not have been slow in developing themselves. For Galicia, besides being a suburb of Portugal, was the base of the operations of the Allies against the line of the enemy's communications, and the province from which they drew their principal supplies of cattle. Finally, it was through the harbours of that province that the greatest facilities could be obtained of stirring up partisan warfare in Biscay and Navarre.

When, on the 8th of August, Wellington arrived upon the Coa, for the purpose of establishing the blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo, he ascertained that, two days previously, Marshal Bessières had introduced into the place two months' provisions. This circumstance obliged him to select some other mode of attack. He might commence immediately the labours of a regular siege, but, in the first place, his *matériel* could not arrive at Almeida earlier than the first week in September; and, in the second, he received intelligence that fresh troops from France had entered Spain, and that the army of the north was much stronger than he had supposed. Taking these facts into account, and considering, with reason, that Almeida offered no security to his battering train, Wellington decided upon continuing the blockade, and upon waiting for a favourable opportunity of acting either against the place, or against the troops in the field. His plan was, to compel the enemy to keep themselves concentrated, and to strike a decisive blow at them whenever a scarcity of provisions should render it necessary for them to disperse. Deducting Hill's corps, which was detached in the direction of the Tagus, he had at that time under his command 40,000 men, inclusive of Sanchez' guerillas. The united forces of

Marmont and Dorsenne amounted to 54,000 infantry, 6000 cavalry, and 120 pieces of cannon.

As soon as the provisions introduced into Ciudad Rodrigo began to fail, the Duke of Ragusa, confident in his superiority of numbers, decided upon making an offensive movement to interrupt the blockade and throw fresh supplies into the place. Leaving one division upon the Tagus to guard the bridges and boats, he crossed the Guaderama with the rest of his army, consisting of five beautiful divisions. These troops arrived at Salamanca in the beginning of September. On the 22nd the cavalry, and one infantry division of the army of Portugal, reached Tamamès. The same day the army of the north, composed of 14,000 or 15,000 admirable troops, and the convoy which it escorted, encamped at Samonos. Marmont put himself in immediate communication with Dorsenne, and it was agreed that the latter should advance with the cavalry of the army of Portugal, and one infantry division, to Moras Verdès, in order to protect the convoy against an English division posted upon the Sierra de Gata, on the right bank of the Agueda, and that, if necessary, the army should support this movement as soon as the communications with Ciudad Rodrigo were established.

This movement took place on the 23rd. The communication with Rodrigo was opened, and the convoy, which carried eight months' provisions, entered the place.

Wellington had by no means anticipated so rapid a concentration of the enemy's strength. His army, besides being numerically inferior, was suffering severely from sickness. On this account, and because he was convinced that it would be imprudent to accept a battle

in advance of Ciudad Rodrigo and the Agueda, he retired to a position not far off, less dangerous in the event of a reverse, but too extensive, and therefore very difficult to defend. The heights of Elbodon, occupied by the centre of his army, were scarcely tenable at all. A river, inclosed by steep banks, separated this corps from the right, and the two wings were so distant from each other, that it would be easy to cut off the retreat of both by pushing the centre briskly back upon Guinaldo.

Availing himself of these favourable circumstances, the Duke of Ragusa quitted Ciudad Rodrigo on the 25th of September, with Thiebaud's division, 30 squadrons, and 12 field-pieces. He was followed, at a considerable distance, by the rest of the infantry formed in echelons. When he arrived in front of Elbodon, the marshal saw the English troops taking up their position on the high ground. The infantry consisted of only two brigades, and the cavalry of 700 or 800 horse. The two brigades were at such a distance from each other, that they could afford no mutual support.

The position being much elevated, the Duke of Ragusa asserts, "that he could form no judgment as to the condition of the force behind it. Not wishing," he says, "to risk a serious affair by attacking with the single infantry division which was at my disposal, I adopted the resolution to employ in that attack only the cavalry and artillery."

It was a great mistake. If the Duke of Ragusa had reconnoitred the position he would have discovered the enemy's weakness, and having satisfied himself of that fact, the action of the cavalry, supported by Thiebaud's division, would have enabled him to obtain a decisive

success. Indeed, he himself has admitted as much when he says, "If, after Montbrun's charge, I had had in hand 8000 or 10,000 infantry, the English army would have been destroyed. It was not yet assembled, and Fuentes Guinaldo, its point of concentration, would have fallen into our hands." There was no need of so many infantry; Thiebaud's division, stronger besides than Marmont pretends, would have been sufficient; and if it had not been sufficient, the commander-in-chief might and ought to have supported it with part of the infantry which had been left in rear of Rodrigo.

Be this as it may, the Duke of Ragusa entered into action with his cavalry and artillery alone. Montbrun charged the position with intrepidity, took four pieces of cannon, and pushed back the cavalry. But the English infantry received the shock of the enemy's squadrons with great gallantry, made a movement in advance for some distance, and retook the four guns. Nevertheless, when Wellington saw the French battalions nearer to the point of attack than his two wings, he gave orders for a retreat, and conducted it with such steadiness, that the troops reached the position of Guinaldo without being interrupted.

During this movement, a square, formed of two battalions of the 5th and 77th regiments of the line, was charged by the enemy's cavalry, upon three of its faces, without being broken. Other charges followed, which produced no greater effect, and at last the cavalry was content to follow the square, having given up all hope of being able to break it. Contrary to his usual custom, Wellington noticed this remarkable exploit in general orders, and held it up as an example to the whole of his infantry.

Having taken the precaution to throw up, beforehand, some intrenchments along the front of the position at Guinaldo, Wellington determined to wait the arrival of his flank divisions, which Montbrun's offensive movement had cut off. It was a bold resolution, for he had now in hand only 14,000 men, of whom 2600 were cavalry, to defend a position, compact no doubt, but little formidable in front and easy to be turned. The rest of the allied troops could not rejoin under a march of four or five hours, and the French army was already in sight of Guinaldo. Fortunately for Wellington, the Duke of Ragusa, the whole of whose divisions had come up during the night between the 25th and 26th and in the course of the following day, did not profit by that favourable conjuncture. "I was greatly tempted," he says, "to strike a blow at the English army, and spent the day in studying its position; but the ill-considered attacks of the preceding campaign had ended so badly, as to hinder me from making any rash attempt." A poor argument wherewith to excuse an irreparable error, of which it may be said that it was the gravest that the Duke of Ragusa ever committed.

Meanwhile Wellington awaited, with the greatest coolness, the arrival of his flank divisions. It is said, that a Spanish general, seeing him lie quietly upon the ground in front of his troops, and nowise troubled about his position, could not avoid exclaiming, "Well, general, you are here with two weak divisions, and you seem to be quite at your ease; it's enough to put one in a fever." The self-possessed Englishman replied, "I have done the best that could be done, according to my own judgment, and hence it is that I don't disturb myself

either about the enemy in my front, or about what they may say in England."

Wellington, however, was constrained to wait where he was longer than he had anticipated. The delay was occasioned by a false movement of Crawfurd, who, misunderstanding the situation of the enemy, thought that it would be dangerous to retreat by Robleda, and had, in consequence, determined on making a long circuit through the mountains. Now the French were already in possession of that pass, insomuch that the commander-in-chief was obliged to send orders to Crawfurd to retrace his steps and follow the Robleda road, which had been originally pointed out to him.

As soon as he had collected the whole of his troops, Wellington broke up, and during the night of the 27th withdrew, by a well-executed concentric movement, between the Coa and the sources of the Agueda. Early next morning the French pursued, and at five in the evening attacked the post of Aldea del Ponte, which, after an obstinate struggle, remained in their possession. This success, however, did not secure for them any decisive advantage.

On the 28th, Wellington, supposing that the Duke of Ragusa intended to pass the Coa, established his army upon the heights beyond Soita, resting his right upon the Sierra de Meras, and his left upon Rendo. This position was about a league in rear of the former. It was not stronger, but it leaned upon a deep ravine, which, in the event of a check, would have seriously compromised the retreat.

Marmont, whom the bold countenance of the English general rendered timid, and who, for want of provisions, was unable to go further, fell back the same day upon

the Tagus; satisfied with having revictualled Ciudad Rodrigo, but evidently annoyed because he had lost a fresh opportunity of beating the English army. One portion of the allied troops renewed the blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo, in order to keep the enemy on the *qui vive*, and to hinder him from making attempts in other quarters. The bulk of the army proceeded to establish itself on both sides of the Coa, and head-quarters were transferred to Freneda.

At this time the English regiments suffered so severely from inflammatory complaints, and particularly from fever, that it was impossible to employ them in important operations.

The authors who deny to Wellington the virtues of determination and courage, have demanded, by a strange contradiction, why he accepted the battle of Elbodon with so few chances of success? He appears to have anticipated this criticism, when he pointed out to his own government that it would have been impolitic to retreat with too much precipitation, at the approach of the enemy. "If the people," he says, "had not seen with their own eyes what was the strength of Marmont's army, they would have entertained an opinion very unfavourable to the English; and this we must prevent."

The affair of Elbodon, like that of Fuentes d'Onoro, would have produced considerable results if Wellington had not been compelled, by the weakness of the Spanish regency, to send Beresford, with 22,000 men, to Estremadura, that he might replace Ballasteros, cover Lisbon, and protect the right flank of the Allies. But for this circumstance, he might have succeeded in making himself master of Ciudad Rodrigo in the month of May, after the fall of Almeida.

The campaign of 1811, in the north, was followed by results highly favourable to the Allies, and was generally admitted to be most honourable to Wellington. It hindered Dorsenne from pursuing his operations against Abadia, and obliged the French to weaken the troops which made head against Mina in Navarre. If the Spaniards had conducted themselves properly;—indeed, if their behaviour had been moderately good, the campaign of Massena, in Portugal, would have resulted in the deliverance of the south of the Peninsula. "We are obliged to contend," says Wellington, "against the mischief which results from the errors of some, the treason of others, the folly and vanity of all. But though we have not succeeded as we might and ought to have done, at all events we have lost no ground, and with a handful of English troops fit for service, we have, since the month of March, kept the whole of the enemy in check. Up to this moment he has made no progress whatever."

The authors of the "Annals of the Campaigns in the Peninsula," and of Lord Londonderry's narrative, blame Lord Wellington for having offered battle to 60,000 French, in the position of Soita, with a river and a deep ravine in his rear. No doubt it was a rash determination; nevertheless retreat, though difficult, was not impossible, and, on the other hand, Wellington, looking to the timid character of his adversary, was pretty well satisfied that he would not be attacked in his position, provided he showed himself determined to defend it. Generals, worthy of the name, are alone able to reason and act in this manner. If war were dependent upon mathematical combinations, great captains would not be so rare as we find them. Still, Wellington is to be censured—

1st. For not having endeavoured to cover the blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo by taking up a central position upon the Coa, which would enable him either to hold in check Marmont and Dorsenne, previously to their junction, or to oppose himself afterwards to their combined efforts.

2d. For having waited for the enemy in a bad position at Elbodon, instead of immediately carrying the whole of the allied force to the rear of Guinaldo.

As to Marmont, his weakness and indecision are evinced by the fact that he permitted the Allies, in spite of their inferiority in numbers, and the defects of their first position, to retire at their leisure, accepting battle during three days, yet suffering no interruption. The Duke of Ragusa did not know how to profit by any of the favourable circumstances which were presented to him, and committed the grave error of executing a series of partial and ill-combined attacks, when a general action would have insured to him decisive results.

While these things were going on, Napoleon had withdrawn from the Peninsula about 60,000 excellent troops, that he might employ them in the Russian campaign. The theatre of operations for the French army became, from that time, necessarily restricted, while the marshals, doomed to receive as reinforcements very feeble detachments of young soldiers, became more and more disgusted with their situation. The rivalries and blunders which had hitherto marred their best combinations, grew unavoidably greater in the absence of the chief of the state. Finally, Napoleon, who alone had genius enough to show a front to all these difficulties, was obliged to hand over the chief direction of the war in Spain, to a king destitute of prestige, without military

talents, having no real strength, domineered over by Spanish ministers, and incapable of putting an end to the opposition, more and more fierce, to which he was exposed from the principal leaders of the army.

Wellington, appreciating at their just value the consequences of this change, resolved to turn to account the only moment when an offensive war, for the deliverance of the Spanish territory, might be conducted with success. The separation of the army of the north from that of the centre, which the failure of provisions brought about, would have greatly facilitated this design, had not Wellington been obliged, for similar reasons, to remain in his cantonments; for his embarrassments and difficulties increased from day to day. In Spain, public opinion, acted upon by the press and the Cortès, was so infuriated against England, that Henry Wellesley pronounced affairs to be in a more hopeless condition than ever. The new Regency, which came into office in January, 1812, was animated, in the matter of the American colonies, by as bad a spirit as the old, and paid no attention whatever to the mediation of Great Britain. Nor was this all. It equipped secretly in Galicia an expedition against the colonies, and employed in that service the artillery which the English ministers had sent to sustain the war in the Peninsula.

In Portugal, Souza's faction, irritated against Wellington because, in order to create resources, he wished all men, without distinction of rank, fortune, or opinion, to pay the tax of the *decima*, opposed the greatest obstacles to the commander-in-chief, and, supported by the Regency, thought of little else than how to get rid of the English, by disgusting, in every way, the illustrious man who was so entirely devoted to the defence

of the national cause. No business was transacted in an agreeable manner, and the *employés* refused to take upon themselves the smallest amount of responsibility. It followed, as a necessary consequence, that the English general was obliged to conduct the public service in his own office, down to its minutest details.

The same causes operated to render the means of transport at all times defective and inefficient. The troops often received no more than half rations, or even quarter rations, and it sometimes happened that they passed three consecutive days without bread. Their clothing was so tattered, that a regiment could scarcely be distinguished by the uniform which it wore. The horses had nothing to eat except chopped hay, and that in such insufficient quantity that they died of starvation. Finally, the heavy rains of autumn produced severe sickness, which sent about 20,000 men to the hospital.

Some amelioration of this state of things was experienced in the cantonments upon the Coa; nevertheless it would have been impossible to assume the offensive against the French generals in Spain, without great risk of miscalculation. Besides, it was necessary, to the accomplishment of the plans of the Allies, that they should first make themselves masters of Ciudad Rodrigo and of Badajoz.

Wellington hoped that by surprising the former of these fortresses, he might compel the Duke of Ragusa, whose army was already straitened for provisions, to abandon the Valley of the Tagus, and concentrate in Leon, now weakened by the detachments which the Emperor had withdrawn from Spain. He calculated, next, that the bad understanding which prevailed among

the French marshals, the miserable state of the roads during the rainy season, and the great distress to which the army of the centre was reduced, would give him time to capture Badajoz, to invade Andalusia, to beat Soult, and destroy the arsenal of Seville. Another reason which induced him to undertake the siege of Rodrigo, was the hope that he would oblige the French army, now on its march against Valencia and Arragon, to fall back. "If we don't succeed in taking the town," he writes to Lord Liverpool, "we shall at least bring back upon ourselves all the force which has marched away, and I hope we may save Valencia, or at all events, afford more time to the Asturians and Galicians,"* &c. &c.

Great boldness was undoubtedly required to attempt, in the presence of an enemy, the capture of two places so important, and at the same time so closely watched by considerable armies. But the coolness, the prudence, and determination of the English general were quite equal to the enterprise. For some time back he had been preparing for it, by a series of well-arranged measures. Thus, in order to facilitate the surprise of Ciudad Rodrigo, he had in the most unostentatious manner repaired Almeida, and laid up in that place a train of artillery, a trestle-bridge equipment, and a large number of gabions and fascines. He had caused some hundreds of light carriages to be constructed upon a particular model, in order to make good what was wanting in his means of transport. He had completely arranged a line of communication with Oporto, and shortened it by improving the navigation of the Douro

* Letter to Lord Liverpool, 7th of Jan., 1812.

—and lastly, he had brought up from Lisbon to Villa de Ponte, upon the left bank of the Agueda, a siege train of 70 pieces of cannon. Meanwhile, to distract the attention of Soult from the point on which the storm was about to burst, he had caused the siege of Tarifa to be begun, and had directed Hill, who was stationed at Portalegre with 15,000 men, to create alarm in Andalusia by making a demonstration upon the road to Seville.

These preparations were as yet incomplete, when Wellington became aware of the departure of the two divisions, which Marmont, still upon the Tagus, had, by order of the Emperor, sent to Valencia. He determined to take advantage of this favourable opportunity, by acting with extreme vigour; but at the very time when he was collecting all the carriages of the country, and 5000 oxen to transport his stores and heavy artillery, viz., in the beginning of January, 1812, the Duke of Ragusa received orders from Napoleon to quit Almaraz, and move towards the north. This movement was the result of the general measures adopted by the Emperor: he withdrew from the Peninsula the whole of the Young Guard, a portion of the Old Guard, and five Polish regiments, in all 15,000 men. He desired Marmont to fix his head-quarters at Valladolid, and gave him charge of the provinces in the north of Spain; viz., Astorga, Benevente, Zamora, Placentia, Salamanca, Toro, Avela, and the right bank of the Tagus as far as Alberche. To assist him in the management of these districts, he strengthened his army with Souham's and Bonnet's divisions from Burgos and the Asturias. The Duke of Ragusa was to have set out immediately, in order to take up his new positions and

relieve the troops (the army of the north under Dorsenne), which were already on the move. But as his forces were not considered sufficiently numerous to meet the English army, directions were given, that in the event of Wellington's assuming the offensive in the north, the army of the centre should supply him with 4000 infantry and all its cavalry; and that the army of the north should furnish the whole of its cavalry, its artillery, and 12,000 infantry. Meanwhile the Duke of Dalmatia was to keep Hill in check, by assembling the 5th corps upon the Guadiana; to pass to the right bank of the Tagus in order to follow him up, and in the event of his rejoining Wellington, to take part in the general operations.

In consequence of these instructions communicated to Marmont, in a letter from Berthier, dated the 13th of December, it became the duty of Dorsenne to fix his head-quarters at Burgos. The orders given to the marshal were, that he should proceed without delay to Valladolid, that he should immediately strengthen the garrison of Rodrigo, by a portion of the army of Portugal; that he should leave Bonnet in the Asturias, improve the fortifications of Astorga, entrench Salamanca, if that were possible, and finally establish his head-quarters there. Hence some of the contingencies on which Wellington had counted, as favouring the capture of Rodrigo by assault, came to nothing. Happily he was favoured in his enterprise by the over-confidence of Marmont, who believed the allied army to be destitute of siege artillery, and little disposed to move from its quarters during the cold season which still continued. The marshal not only took no precautions to watch the place, but he had the still greater imprudence to re-

duce the garrison to 1800 men, or about one-third of the strength which was necessary to its defence.

For some time the moral condition of the two armies underwent no change. The same false security reigned in the camp of Marmont, the same apparent carelessness and secret activity prevailed in that of the English. Suddenly Wellington's army, in defiance of frost and snow, passed the Agueda on the 7th of January, part upon a bridge which was constructed at Marialva, part at a ford below the town. The same day the place was invested.

Ciudad Rodrigo had at the time a double *enceinte*. The first was a continuous *fausse braie* (a sort of retrenchment, the crest of which is seen over the glacis), while the second was an old wall, thirty-two feet in height, constructed of bad masonry, and well nigh destitute of flanks. The outer defences consisted of an earth-work, which the Spaniards had thrown up, during the investment of 1810, in front of the suburbs; and of three convents, converted, in the course of the same year, into fortified posts by the French. The garrison was provisioned for one month only.

The attack was pushed with considerable vigour, but the weather was rainy, and the means of transport proved insufficient. Instead of 1400 cars, which Wellington had demanded, he obtained only 450. The whole of his siege artillery amounted to 38 24-pounders; he had neither howitzers nor mortars, and powder and shot were scarce.

During the night of the 8th, a detachment of 300 men, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Colburn, carried by assault, the *lunette* A. (see plan) which the enemy had constructed upon the hill of the great Teso

about 600 yards from the ramparts, and which was protected at a distance of 350 yards by two batteries, erected upon the terrace of the convent of San Francisco. The effective strength of the besieging army was about 35,000 men, but the engineer officers and the troops were without experience. The sap apparatus also was defective, and the means of transport inadequate; hence the works advanced but slowly, and the cold was besides so intense that it was found necessary to relieve the working parties twice every night.

On the 13th, Wellington, apprehensive lest Marshal Marmont should advance to relieve the place, gave orders to commence breaching with the batteries in the first parallel, and to proceed at once to the assault without waiting till the fire of the besieged should be subdued, the descent of the ditch completed, and the counterscarp crowned. In an artistic point of view, it was a reprehensible determination. But there are seasons in war, when, to gain time, it is necessary to lose men. In the night between the 13th and 14th, the English surprised the convent of Santa Cruz, situated at the foot of the glacis, and garrisoned by fifty men, whose murderous fire interrupted the approaches. On the 14th, at half-past four in the evening, 25 guns (24-pounders) began to batter in breach the northern salient of the town. Two other pieces were turned upon the convent of San Francisco. Though mounted at 530 yards' distance, these guns caused considerable damage. The same day, General Barrie, between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning, made a sortie with 500 men, and succeeded in overturning the greater number of the gabions which had been placed during the preceding night.

Between the 14th and 15th, the besiegers carried the

SIEGE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

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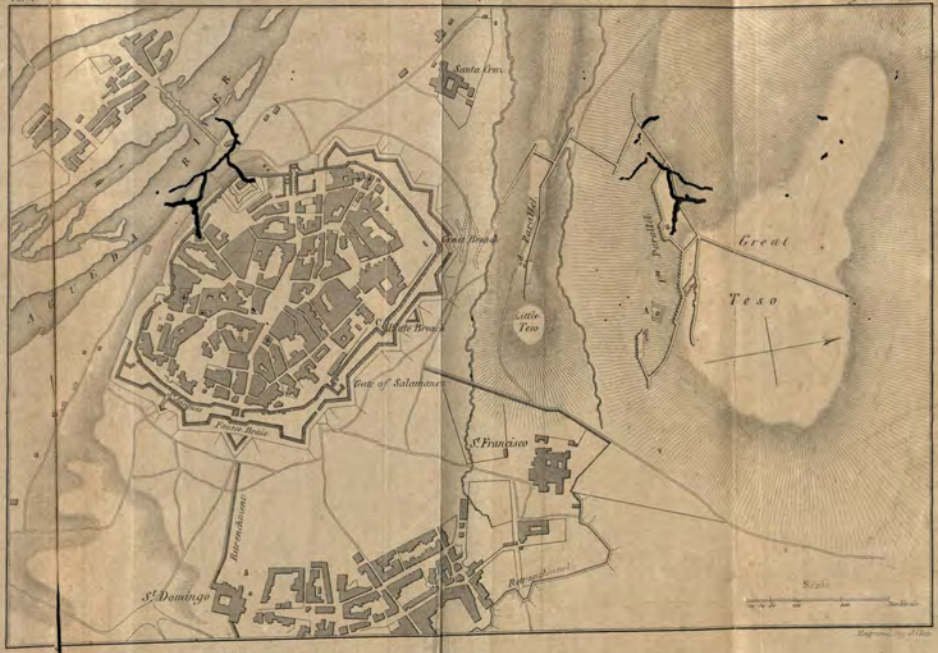

convent of San Francisco, which took the second parallel in reverse. They occupied it in force, so as to cover their flank, and then continued the parallel as far as the crest of the little Teso.

Perceiving that the besieged were retrenching the breach, Wellington determined to turn it, by opening a second in the tower C., which flanked one of the curtains of the place. The point was well chosen.

The first summons was sent in on the 16th, to which General Barrie replied, "that he was ready to bury himself with his garrison under the ruins of the town." On the 18th, the old tower, battered by 7 24-pounders, fell into the ditch. On the following day, the two breaches were pronounced practicable; whereupon Wellington, under cover of the trenches and amidst the tumult of a terrible cannonade, dictated an order, precise and circumstantial, which laid down all the arrangements for the assault. At seven in the evening, two columns, under the orders of Generals Picton and Crawfurd, moved towards the breaches, while Pack's Portuguese brigade received instructions to make a false attack upon the San Iago gate, on the other side of the river. "These movements," says Londonderry, "were executed with mechanical precision. Picton attacked the great breach on the north side of the town. His troops descended into the ditch with ladders, or by jumping upon bags of hay, which had reduced its depth to about eight feet. They escaladed the *fausse braie*, then mounted, in good order and with great bravery, to the assault of the place, but were twice repulsed before they succeeded in penetrating into the town."

The little breach attacked by Crawfurd offered less

resistance; it fell at the first attempt, and success so prompt in this quarter exercised great influence over the defence of the other breach, which a strong retrenchment appeared to have rendered impregnable. For the defenders, alarmed by the sound of firing behind them, concluded that further resistance was useless, and retired after exploding their mines. These destroyed a great number of the assailants, and, among the rest, the gallant general M'Kinnon. The French defended themselves from house to house, till they reached the castle square, where they laid down their arms.

Meanwhile Pack's false attack was become a real one. Having encountered little resistance, he threw himself upon the *fausse braie*, and made prisoners of the troops who held it.

Great blame, too much, indeed, is thrown by General Barrie upon the defenders of the little breach; for the combat upon that point was fierce, and the English lost there one of their best generals, the intrepid Crawfurd. The defence of the great breach, however, lasted longer, and caused the English severe loss.

According to Jones, "The capture of Ciudad Rodrigo deserves to take rank among the most brilliant exploits of the English army, because it offers, so to speak, the only well-authenticated example of a breach retrenched, and well supplied with men, being carried by an effort of cool but determined courage against a brave and skilful enemy." It is certain that, of all the sieges undertaken by Wellington in the Peninsula, this was the most creditable to the English engineers. The reason is, that the resources in men and *matériel* were greater in proportion to those of the enemy at Ciudad Rodrigo than at the other sieges, and also because the

engineers were able to employ chosen parties of men of the 3rd division who had been instructed during the summer in the art of sapping.

The English soldiers, unfortunately, tarnished the glory of their victory by frightful brigandage. They set fire to the town in several places, and entirely plundered the houses which the flames left untouched. Excited by the battle and mad with drink, they fired one upon another, and threatened the very officers who were desirous of putting a stop to these outrages. So true it is that carnage and drunkenness render the soldier deaf to the voice of honour and of discipline.

It is the duty of the historian to denounce the abuse of strength and the savage reprisals of conquerors; nor shall we shrink from the performance of that duty; but while we fulfil it, let us not forget to protest against the malevolence of writers who hold the Duke of Wellington responsible for the excesses committed at Ciudad Rodrigo.

"The town," says M. Thiers, "was pillaged, the Duke having been obliged to concede that barbarous act to the temper of his soldiers. We entertain a profound respect for the English nation and its brave army, but we must be permitted to remark, that there is no need of such a stimulant to excite French soldiers to their duty." We, in our turn, must be permitted to observe, that nothing, absolutely nothing, can justify the censure here cast upon the English general; and, as to the testimony borne to the good conduct of French soldiers, we shall content ourselves by calling attention to the sack of Evora, the plunder of Oporto, Leyria, Cordova, and Medina; the burning of Manresa, the massacres of Ucles, and the terrible executions in Tarragona, upon

which M. Thiers is satisfied to make this cool remark—"Our soldiers, yielding to a sentiment common to all troops who have taken a town by assault, considered Tarragona as their own property; and spread themselves among the houses, where they committed more of mischief than of pillage." Very different from this mild view of the case, is the honest testimony of Marshal Souchet, who says, in plain words, "the assault was followed by a frightful massacre; 4000 men were shot in the streets, and of 10,000 or 12,000, who endeavoured to save themselves by jumping over the walls, 1000 were sabred or drowned."

The historian of the "Consulate and the Empire," who is so severe upon the English, has yet the courage to risk the displeasure of his countrymen by pointing out these horrors which history cannot pardon.

The loss in the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo amounted to 300 men killed; 1500 soldiers, and 80 officers were made prisoners. According to an official statement, the English, between the 8th and 19th, had 178 men killed and 818 wounded; and, during the assault, 6 officers and 140 soldiers killed; 60 officers and 500 soldiers wounded. There were found in the place an immense quantity of round shot, shells, and cartridges, a considerable depôt of arms, a well-provisioned arsenal, and 150 pieces of artillery, including the whole of the siege train of the army of the centre.

Let us now see what Marshal Marmont was doing to prevent the fall of Rodrigo. The order directing him to proceed without delay to Valladolid, was dated the 13th of December. It ought to have reached him before the 27th, because Berthier's correspondence with the Duke of Ragusa attests, that despatches were con-

veyed from Paris to Valladolid in eleven days. Now it was only on the 5th of January that Marmont set out in person. He left the 6th division (Brennier's) in the valley of the Tagus, to observe Estremadura, and directed its commander to communicate with the 2nd (Clausel's division) posted at Avila. The division of dragoons, the artillery, the stores, with the 3rd and 5th divisions of infantry, proceeded by the most direct roads towards the Douro. The light cavalry, with the 1st and 4th divisions of infantry, were operating towards Valencia; and the 7th (Souham's) occupied Salamanca, while the 8th, under Bonnet, was still in the Asturias.

The Duke of Ragusa directed his march by Avila, where he halted, and did not arrive at Valladolid till the 11th of January. He busied himself making arrangements with General Drouet for the relief of his various posts, till the 15th, when an officer, sent from Salamanca, brought him news that the English had suddenly taken the field. At this unlooked-for intelligence, he despatched orders to all his columns that were in march, to move upon Medina del Campo and Salamanca. He called in, at the same time, the 2nd and 6th divisions; and, requesting General Dorsenne to co-operate with him, directed upon the point of concentration, a division of the Young Guard, about 6000 strong, as well as the cavalry and the artillery. Finally, he ordered up Foy's division from the Asturias, which Montbrun had placed in echelon, and the corps of Montbrun himself. He hoped by these means to assemble, between the 26th and 27th, 32,000 men in front of the English upon the Agueda, and by the 1st and 2nd of February, 40,000 men. But on the 21st, just as he arrived in person at Fuente el Sauco, the mar-

shal received the astounding intelligence that Rodrigo had fallen. He was deeply affected by this check, and the more so, that he no longer possessed the means of recovering the moral ascendancy of which he had been deprived.

Greatly irritated by the loss of so important a place, the Emperor covered with reproaches Marmont and Dorsenne, who endeavoured each to exculpate himself by throwing the blame upon the other. There was nothing surprising in this, for the French generals in Spain, during the last four years, had set no other example to their subordinates; but that which passes all bounds, and deserves severe censure, is the conduct of the Duke of Ragusa, who permitted himself to speak of General Barrie as a wretched creature, incapable of defending a post committed to his keeping. Nor did Dorsenne show himself more just towards the defender of Ciudad Rodrigo; who, with a garrison reduced to 1000 sound men, had done all that it was possible to do at the moment of a double assault.

The true explanation of the loss of Ciudad Rodrigo is to be found in the ill-timed orders of Napoleon and the irresolution of the Duke of Ragusa. The latter was certainly right in saying, that "Wellington undertook the siege because he saw the dispersion of the French army, the departure of the army of the north for France, and the detachments made into Valencia." Still, the Duke of Ragusa should have added that, if he himself had sooner quitted the valley of the Tagus, and marched with greater rapidity, he could have arrived in time to relieve the garrison of Rodrigo, as Berthier, in his letter of the 13th of December, required him to do. Here, then, lies his great and only error; and he fell

into it because he believed that Rodrigo could hold out for at least three weeks, and, perhaps, too, because he imagined that his adversary would not be bold enough to carry the place by so vigorous a stroke.

The siege of Rodrigo obtained for Wellington the title of Earl, and an annual pension of 2000*l.* The Spanish government made him a grandee of the first class, and Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo, while the Portuguese Regency, which as yet had conferred no title, nor bestowed any honours upon English officers, created him Marquis of Torres-Vedras.

The loss of the important fortress of the Agueda imposed upon the Duke of Ragusa the necessity of forming a new *point d'appui*. He endeavoured, in consequence, to put Salamanca in a condition to sustain a siege, and fortified, with that object in view, three convents, which formed a sort of triangle, and enclosed within them a considerable portion of ground. These works were carried on with the greatest possible activity.

Meanwhile, during the early days of February, Montbrun's detachment having rejoined, Marmont adopted the following measures for observing Estremadura. He left the 1st and 4th divisions with 500 horse in the valley of the Tagus. He posted the 6th near at hand behind the mountains of Monte Betro, and left the 8th division in observation in the province of Leon. The light cavalry, under the command of Montbrun, occupied Salamanca, and the rest of the army was established on the Douro, and in the province of Avila.

Having ascertained on the 22nd of February that Wellington had moved upon the Guadiana, and was making preparations to besiege Badajoz, the Duke of Ragusa assumed the responsibility of ordering General

Foy to push an advanced guard to Jaraicejo, and to place in rear of it the three divisions of which he was in command. He moved in person to support Foy with the 2nd division; the command at Tormès he committed to General Bonnet, and placed General Souham with one division upon the Douro and the Esla. These dispositions, as they effectually secured the co-operation of the armies of Portugal and of the south, were intended to prevent the siege of Badajoz. With a view to obtain a result still more decisive, Marshal Marmont proposed to the Emperor to unite, under the command of one man, the armies of the north, of the centre, and of Portugal. This measure might have been excellent in itself, but it required a leader of perhaps greater capacity than the Duke of Ragusa, for which reason the Emperor was indisposed to adopt it. He replied to Marmont that "he was meddling with matters which did not concern him; that Badajoz was not committed to his charge; that he had nothing to do but to defend the north of the Peninsula against the English, which was easy enough; that it belonged to the army of Andalusia to protect Badajoz, and that it was quite strong enough to effect that purpose if the English should attack the place with two divisions only, viz., with Hill's corps reinforced; but that if they attacked with five, in other words, with almost the whole of their army, and Wellington at its head, then a ready means would be afforded to the army of Portugal of making them let go their hold; because the army of Portugal might, in this case, break through the crowd of detachments which would be left along the course of the Agueda, seize Coimbra, and march as far as Thomar, a movement which would soon oblige Lord Wellington to retrace his steps, and give up all idea of capturing Badajoz."

It was to no purpose that the Duke of Ragusa held to his opinion that it would be wise to act upon the defensive, by occupying the valley of the Tagus with four divisions of the army of Portugal. A severe letter, conveying positive orders, at last compelled him to assume the offensive in Beira, an operation which, owing to his want of resources, must end in nothing, because it could not have the effect even of deceiving the enemy. The consequence was that he withdrew his troops from the valley of the Tagus, in order to assemble them on the Tormès, while his head-quarters were transferred from Valladolid to Salamanca. At the same time he was directed to occupy the Asturias which it was impossible to do effectually, with less than 8000 men. Hence the force at his disposal, for active operations against the English, fell away to 31,000 infantry, and 2500 cavalry, besides being destitute of provisions, of transport, and of heavy artillery.

Lord Wellington, who had suspended his enterprise against Badajoz, so long as Marmont kept four divisions in the neighbourhood of the Tagus, now found himself in a condition to go forward with his projects. And it must be acknowledged that the French marshal committed no mistake when he announced that such would be the probable results of the steps which had been taken. In his letter of the 2nd of March, addressed to Berthier, he says: "As it is evident to me that the siege of Badajoz was suspended in consequence of the presence of my three divisions in the valley of the Tagus, my opinion is that my movement towards the Tormès will endanger that place. I venture therefore to hope, that if misfortune befall, it will not be attributed to any fault of mine."

As early as the month of December, a bridge equipment was, by order of Lord Wellington, moved from Abrantes to Elvas. Two thousand workmen were employed in the latter town to construct siege materials. A park of seventy-eight pieces of cannon had secretly arrived from Lisbon; and, lastly, convoys of tools and stores, removed from Ciudad Rodrigo, were sent in the same direction. Unfortunately the authorities did not support the English general on that occasion. The roads of communication had not been repaired, and the means of transport were always insufficient. Nevertheless, Wellington found himself in a condition, unknown to the enemy, to invest Badajoz in the beginning of March. Not one of his precautions was uncalled for; for he was endeavouring to make himself master of a fortified town, in the relief of which three French armies had it in their power to co-operate.

It was incumbent upon Wellington to provide against the chance that Marmont would immediately invade Galicia, or Portugal on the north of the Douro, in order to make a diversion in favour of Badajoz; or else enter Estremadura, with a view to combine his efforts with those of Marshal Soult. To guard against that twofold eventuality, he issued distinct orders, not only to revictual, repair, and fortify Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, but even to defend the passage of rivers and defiles, in the event of the French army assuming the offensive. To 25,000 Spanish and Portuguese troops this charge was intrusted, and they were directed besides to throw themselves on Marmont's rear, if, in spite of the obstacles opposed directly to his march, and of the serious difficulties of his own position, he should attempt to make a diversion in favour either of

Badajoz or of Andalusia. These measures being taken the English army broke up.

By this time the Duke of Ragusa was at Salamanca, and the better to find subsistence for his troops he scattered them anew. It was a circumstance eminently favourable to the Allies; for if Marmont had been able to keep his army together upon the Tormès, with its advanced posts near Ciudad Rodrigo, they would have incurred the greatest risks. In fact, Wellington performed his march across the Alentejo contrary to all the laws of strategy, because through lack of transport the clothing of the army could not be forwarded in that direction, and he found it necessary to send the regiments themselves to seek it upon the Douro, the Mondego, and the Tagus. Such a dispersion of his force in the presence of the enemy would have undoubtedly led to serious consequences, had Marmont been aware of the fact, or been in a condition to take advantage of it.

The English army arrived at Elvas on the 11th of March. All the preparations for the investment had been completed on the 6th, but Evora, a rich town, which for three years past had suffered little from the war, obstinately refused to supply a single carriage;—a circumstance which retarded the investment for some days, and obliged the Allies to carry on their siege works amid the rains of the equinox.

In arranging this plan, Wellington calculated on the possibility of carrying the lunette of Picurina by assault (see plan), of opening a second parallel at the foot of that work, and of battering in breach the body of the place, of which the escarp was, in many parts, so exposed, as to render unnecessary the establishment of batteries upon the edge of the ditch. Here, as at Ciudad

Rodrigo, promptitude of action was everything. There was no time to wait for regular approaches.

On the 16th, Wellington established his pontoons on the Guadiana, two leagues from Badajoz. Having thus secured his communications, he proceeded at once to invest the place. The English army amounted to about 16,000 men, exclusive of Hill's corps, which was established at Merida; and that of Graham, detached to Santa Marta, in order to cover the siege operations against Soult's army now assembled in Upper Estremadura.

Leith's division was placed, provisionally, in reserve at Campo Mayor. The town was closely invested on the 17th, and the Duke directed the first parallel to be opened the same night. A brave officer, General Philippon, who had covered himself with glory in a former siege, was governor of Badajoz. His garrison consisted of 5000 French, Spaniards, and Hessians, a number insufficient for the proper defence of works which required, at least, 7000 to man them. He had in his magazines at that time provisions for forty or fifty days, but shot and shell were deficient, and his stock of powder did not exceed 150,000 pounds. Moreover, the defenders were destitute of wood fit for palisading and blindages. With respect to the works, they were tolerably well repaired, and some of their original defects had been remedied: for example, there was established, in order to cover San Christoval, a lunette in front of that fort, well provided with accessory defences. The glacis, which used to expose the bottom of the escarp, had been raised. The mines had been improved which were intended to blow up the assailable bastions. A retrenchment had been completed in the

castle, and a large lunette in the ditches. Finally, the gorge of Fort Pardaleras was completely closed; the Rivillas had been dammed up, and the ditches deepened in many places by blasting the rock. The only bastion so far exposed as to admit of being battered from a distance was the Trinity (bastion No. 7.), and against that point the attack was therefore directed.

The works proceeded with as much celerity as imperfect materials, frightful weather, muddy ground, and inadequate means of transport would permit. On the 19th, an hour after dinner, the governor ordered a sortie with two battalions, 100 sappers, 40 horsemen, and one gun; these troops, commanded by General Veiland, destroyed a part of the parallel, and carried off 455 intrenching tools; but the enemy soon recovered from their surprise, and compelled the sortie to retire with the loss of 20 killed and 160 wounded. On the side of the English there were 150 men put *hors de combat*, among whom was Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, director of the attacks. A little sortie, effected during the night of the 20th, was repulsed without producing any result. At this time the lower part of the parallel became flooded. The whole of the morning of the 22nd was employed in baling it out, and, to guard against the repetition of a similar accident, the bottom of the trench was riveted with fascines. About four in the afternoon, however, a torrent of rain fell, which partially filled the whole of the trenches. The pontoon bridge upon the Guadiana was at the same time carried away, and the current became so strong that the flying bridges were not worked without the greatest difficulty. Serious doubts began to be entertained whether it would be possible to obtain any more provisions, or to convey

to the batteries the guns and necessary ammunition. "Everybody," says Colonel Jones, "believed that we should be obliged to withdraw from before the place."

The energy displayed by Wellington to overcome these difficulties was marvellous. The bridge was soon restored, and on the 25th the first batteries were in a condition to commence their fire. On that day, at eleven in the morning, twenty-three pieces of large calibre opened upon the revêtements of the Picurina lunette, the left face of bastion No. 7, and the works of the front 8 and 9. The salient of the lunette having suffered severely, it was determined to storm in the night, between the 25th and 26th. Accordingly, 700 men, under the command of General Kemp, assailed the work, which was defended by 200 combatants and seven pieces of cannon. After a resistance of three quarters of an hour, which General Philippon considered by no means sufficient, the lunette fell into the hands of the assailants, who put to death a great many of the defenders.

Approaches were immediately begun against the ravelin of St. Roque, which covered the inundation of the Rivillas; a serious obstacle created in advance of the front attack. Some authors pretend that at this time Wellington meditated attacking the front 8—9, and that the capture of Fort Picurina induced him to make choice of front 6—7. But the journal of the sieges, kept by Colonel Jones, proves that from the first he had resolved to breach the right face of bastion 7, as well as the left flank of bastion 6, and that the only resolution taken afterwards was to make a breach in the curtain 6—7 also.

In pursuance of this plan, Wellington caused a second

SIEGE OF BADAJOZ.

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parallel to be opened at the gorge of the fort, and immediately constructed two advanced breaching batteries upon that plateau. These batteries, which could discover the foot of the escarp, came into action on the 30th and 31st.

As there could no longer be any doubt respecting the point of attack, Philippon caused a retrenchment of 375 yards in extent to be commenced in rear of the front 6—7. One of the batteries laid bare the right face of bastion 7 (the Trinity), the other the left flank of bastion 6 (Santa Maria), from which a fire could be kept up upon the breach of the Trinity. A new battery was commenced between the 29th and the 30th, to uncover the ravelin of St. Roque and the curtain 7—8 (see plan 12). The establishment of these batteries ought to have been restrained by a steady cannonade, but unfortunately the defenders were obliged to relax their fire in order not to exhaust their powder and shot.

Meanwhile Marshal Soult, who entertained no apprehension about the city, but expected a great battle, was carefully organising a strong corps, which he augmented by calling in Drouet and Daricau. To make head against that danger, Wellington had covered the siege with an army of observation, and directed the Spanish corps that were in the neighbourhood of the Lower Guadiana, to fall upon Seville, as soon as Soult should advance.

It was at this period that information reached the allied head-quarters of the concentration of Marmont's army in the neighbourhood of Salamanca, and the preparations which he was making for an offensive movement against Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida. More than ever then it became important to press the siege, and

Wellington, when he became acquainted with Soult's junction with Drouet and Daricau, waited the result with much anxiety. As he was not strong enough at once to continue the attacks, and to accept battle from the army of Andalusia, he conceived the design of advancing with a large portion of his troops to meet the enemy, and of waiting for him in the position of Albuera. But he abandoned that idea, when it was announced to him that the breaches were practicable. For Soult was then only in Llerena, and it was not unreasonable to hope that the place might be carried, before he should be called upon to deal with the relieving force. The resolution was, undoubtedly, very bold, but there was no alternative.

In the afternoon of the 5th of April, the commander-in-chief visited the trenches, and reconnoitred the breaches. He found that the measures adopted by Philippon were excellent, and that to deliver the assault with any chance of success, it would be necessary to open a new breach in the curtain 6—7. Justly believing that the eight days employed by his artillery in making the first breaches, had been made use of by the enemy to construct solid entrenchments in rear of the menaced points, he thought that, by beating down the curtain, the old masonry of which could be ruined within a few hours, he might turn these entrenchments, as he had turned those of Ciudad Rodrigo. Accordingly, at daybreak, on the 6th, fourteen pieces were directed against the curtain, which, in less than two hours and a half, so completely ruined the escarp, that before night a third breach, sixteen yards in extent, was in a state to be made use of.

Contrary to the usages of war, Wellington never

summoned the garrison to surrender. English authors explain the circumstance by saying, that he held the courage and firmness of Philippon in too high estimation to address to him a demand which that brave man must regard as an insult. General Lamare and Major Belmas, on the other hand, attribute Wellington's omission to a thirst for vengeance, a feeling the existence of which on his part we cannot for a moment admit. Wellington had too much to gain by prompt success, and too many risks to run in making the assault, not to be desirous of a capitulation. Common prudence, to speak of no higher principle, would have led him to prefer an honourable arrangement to a violent issue, which could not fail to cost the lives of hundreds of his best soldiers. Indeed, a general accustomed to leave nothing to chance, and to take the greatest possible care of his men, who had no violent passions to indulge, and was always kindly disposed towards his enemies, could not act the part which has been attributed to him. Yet Wellington would have done well, if it were only to avoid the reproaches which have since been heaped upon him, had he proposed to Philippon a capitulation worthy of the gallant defenders of Badajoz and their intrepid commander.

On the evening of the 6th, 18,000 men got under arms, and several columns were formed, intended for three principal attacks. On the right, one division under Picton, received orders to escalade the castle, the walls of which were from seven to fifteen yards high; on the left, General Leith's division prepared to deliver two false attacks, one upon the outer work called the Pardaleras, the other upon the bastion No. 1, (Saint Vincent,) which rested upon the Guadiana. In the

centre, two divisions, forming the main body of the English troops, were directed, under General Colville and Lieutenant-Colonel Barnard, to assault the breaches. Finally, a part of the guard of the trenches was directed against the ravelin of Saint Roque, while Power's Portuguese brigade, which had kept up the investment of the place on the right bank of the Guadiana, received orders to make false attacks upon the tête-de-pont, Fort San Christoval, and a new redoubt, called *Mon Cœur*.

It is impossible to deny that these dispositions were very able, but, in truth, the success of the Allies must be attributed mainly to the heroic valour displayed by the troops during the assault. With a view to distract the attention of the enemy, orders were given to begin the attack at ten o'clock, upon all points at the same time. The weather was so gloomy, and the darkness so profound, that it was impossible to see the columns at a distance of twenty paces. Having assembled in the trenches, the troops marched forward, preceded by parties of men who carried ladders. Each soldier was supplied with a sack of hay, which he was to throw into the ditch in order to lessen its depth, and so the columns advanced to the glacis. And suddenly there was heard in the town the rattle of arms and the dull noise of battalions, which threw themselves over the counterscarp into the ditch. "They come, they come!" cried a voice, and almost at the same instant a fearful explosion took place under the feet of the assailants. It was the noise of detonating balls of shells and blazing rockets which Colonel Lamare had arranged at the bottom of the breach. To the profound darkness, there succeeded all at once the light of an immense fire, which presented to the eyes a spectacle too horrible to be described. A wild cry of

"Vive l'Empereur!" replied from the ramparts to the groans of the poor soldiers huddled down pell-mell, into the ditch, where they died by hundreds; and, at the same instant, there were directed upon the confused mass several discharges of case shot from the flanking batteries still untouched, and a rolling fire of musketry delivered at point blank by 700 chosen men, each furnished with three firelocks. The English columns appeared to be in the midst of a volcano, the eruptions of which, succeeding each other minute after minute, presented the appearance, at a distance, of showers of living flame. It was not a battle, it was, to adopt the expression of Colonel Lamare, "a massacre and butchery."

Meanwhile the English, full of courage and perfectly calm, threw themselves a second time upon the breach. A *cunette* full of water separated them from the bottom of the ramparts. It was literally choked with dead, and upon that bridge of human flesh, they passed it. And then might be seen the long red columns of the English dragging themselves like bloody serpents amidst the blazing ruins of the place, till a new obstacle presented itself before them. The slope of the breach which they believed to be entirely bare, was coyered with shells and burning planks, stuck all over with nails and fireworks; and was swept with round shot and bullets. No matter! The columns continued to advance. But on gaining the summit they were stopped by a wall of bayonets and a line of chevaux de frise, constructed out of sword blades. In vain they strove to break that iron line. The dead were piled upon the dead, and the wounded fell into the arms of the soldiers who followed them. The breach became slippery with the blood which ran down it, and the line of swords

could not be broken through. Seeing the success of their stratagem, the French raised anew the cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" and the column of assault, slaughtered and decimated, fell back silently into the ditch, that it might prepare for a fresh effort.

The same courage was displayed in the attack of all the three breaches, but it was chiefly in that of the Trinity bastion that the obstinacy of the struggle was greatest. Two hours of useless efforts at length convinced the soldiers that then the breach was impracticable. 3000 men were put *hors de combat*, and strange to say, the loss to the garrison was altogether inconsiderable.

While this was going on, Picton's division advanced, with the greatest intrepidity, to the escalade of the front 8—9, near the castle, which was defended by 300 Hessians. The assailants, overwhelmed with heavy stones, grenades, and beams of wood, hurled from the walls;—taken in flank by a murderous fire of musketry, and received at the top of the ladders with thrusts of pike and bayonet, were compelled, after heavy loss, to retire, leaving behind, among the wounded, one of their chiefs, the gallant General Kempt.

Meanwhile the ravelin of St. Roque, attacked at once by the gorge and the front 8—9, remained in possession of the English. Picton repulsed, but not discouraged, destroyed the sluice of the Rivillas—then marched by his right and prepared for a second attempt upon the walls of the castle, defended by 100 Hessians and twenty-five Frenchmen. It was now half-past eleven o'clock. Though the ranks of the English were, as yet, imperfectly formed, the gallant Colonel Ridge, seizing a ladder, placed it against the castle, and called upon his

men to follow. In a moment might be seen a few brave fellows, surrounded, on the top of the rampart, where they maintained themselves till support enough arrived to hazard an advance. The garrison, astonished, and in some measure surprised, retreated by the double gate into the town, and abandoned the castle to the assailants. That brilliant exploit cost the life of the gallant chief who led the way to it. "No one," says Napier, "died with greater glory on that fatal night, in which so many warriors distinguished themselves by deeds deserving to be recorded in history."

The third division entered the castle, but fearing to risk the loss of a point which assured the capture of the place, or else suspecting the approach to be too difficult, they made no attempt to drive the enemy from the breaches.

The first column of Leith's division failed completely in its false attack upon Pardaleras. That work, obstinately defended by Colonel Pineau, did not surrender till the following day, when the town was already in possession of the English. The second column, under the command of General Walker, encountered less opposition in escalading the bastion St. Vincent; the scarp of which, however, was twenty-six feet and a half in height. But the guard of that bastion had been twice weakened, by sending reinforcements to the troops in the castle, which rendered a long defence of the post impossible. The loss of the English at this point amounted to 600 men.

Wellington watched with anxiety the terrible scene which was passing at the foot of the breach. It was midnight when a mounted officer came to report to him the various incidents of the assault. The pallor of his countenance indicated how deeply the sad tale

moved him. Yet no sign of agitation disturbed his habitual serenity. With the utmost calmness he gave orders to withdraw the troops immediately, and reform them for a new assault. But scarcely had this disposition been made when a messenger from Picton informed him of the capture of the castle. That good news, followed soon afterwards by tidings of the successful escalade of St. Vincent, caused him to anticipate a speedy and decisive success. He directed Picton to keep quiet till the morning, and then to advance with 2000 men upon the rear of the besieged, while Barnard and Colville should deliver a new assault. He took measures, at the same time, to insure the possession of the ravelin of St. Roque, which had been escaladed by the gorge at an early hour in the evening; finally, he gave instructions to break down the dam-head and the bridge over the inundation, when the proper moment should arrive.

About half-past one o'clock, Philippon was informed that the enemy had renewed his attack upon the castle, and made himself master of that work. An inexact report, received a few minutes previously, as well as his confidence in the strength of the castle, caused him to doubt the truth of this information. He therefore did nothing, and when, on receipt of a second communication, he sent his reserve, consisting of 200 men only, to the support of the threatened work, the English were already in possession of the gate. A sharp musketry fire met them in the passage, by which the four companies were dispersed. Meanwhile the governor directed two companies from the St. Vincent bastion to penetrate to the castle by another gate, which he believed to be still open; but, either by mistake or treachery, these

Vol. I

PLAN OF THE BREACHES OF BADAJOZ IN 1812.

Pl. XIII

Explanation.

1,2,3. Breaches.
4,5. Retrenchments behind the breaches.
6,7,8. Bastions.
9,10,11. Retrenchments of cotton and sand bags before which was placed a range chevaux de frize of sword blades.
12. Redan thrown up during the siege on an old mound originally intended for a ravelin.
13. Ravelin Picurina.
14. Ravelin San Roque.
15. Gate of Trinidad.
16. Church of Trinidad the walls of which were crenilated.
17,18,19, 20, 21, 22, 23, Cuttings made in the streets to serve as a second retrenchment.
24. Nine pieces loaded with grape to sweep the summit of the breach and the terre-plein of the curtain.
26,27. Range of shells before the breaches.
28. Post in which was a company to flank the breach.
29. Two pieces loaded with grape.
30,31. Contre-garde and incomplete tenaille.
32,33. Inundation.
34. Ditch for security and communication.
35,36. Gurrete made during the siege.
37. Covered way.
38,39,40. Allied trenches.
41,42,43. Breaching batteries.
44,45. English divisions marching to the assault.
46,47. Houses destroyed during the siege to clear the ramparts.

Scale.

Engraved by J. Shaw

troops proceeded to the breach, where they were of no use whatever.

We have seen that the attack of Walker's brigade, favoured by the departure of the companies sent to the assistance to the castle, proved completely successful. As soon as this brigade found itself in possession of St. Vincent, it detached one portion of the troops into the town, to dislodge the enemy from the houses, while the rest, sweeping the ramparts, carried three bastions in succession, at the point of the bayonet. This event,—the loss of the castle, which the garrison considered as their last resource, and the dispersion of the three companies of reserve, broke down, all at once, the *morale* of certain officers, and confusion began. The orders of the governor were no longer attended to by the troops. There was firing in the streets; there was fighting in the houses; and everywhere might be heard the shouts of the victors and the groans of the wounded. Nevertheless, Philippon and General Veiland gathered round them, in the midst of the tumult, about 100 men, and a few troopers, with whom, about half-past one, they withdrew into Fort St. Christoval. At the same time they sent orders to the troops engaged in the breaches to fall back upon them; but the staff-officer who carried the order never reached his destination, and these brave men remained at their post till they saw that the place was carried all round them. Some, upon this, broke their arms and abandoned themselves to their fate. Others, more desperate, threw themselves into the Pardaleras, and into the houses of the town, where they fired away their last cartridge, defending themselves till daybreak.

At six in the morning the governor found himself

under the stern necessity of capitulating. There were in St. Christoval but thirty rounds of ammunition, and the fort was entirely unprovisioned. A white flag was accordingly hoisted upon a bayonet, and perceiving the signal, the garrison surrendered, at discretion. It consisted at that moment of 2750 effective men, and 750 non-combatants or sick; 1300 men had been killed or wounded during the siege.

The English army sustained a much heavier loss. Wellington reckoned it at 5000 men, of whom 3500 fell during the assault; and Colonel Jones, of the Engineers, at 72 officers and 963 men killed, 306 officers and 3483 men wounded; out of which number 49 officers and 744 soldiers were killed, and 258 officers, and 2600 men wounded, during the night of the assault. Philippon and Lamare, however, affirm, that they received in England information which proved that the loss of the English army really amounted to more than 7000 men. But, however this may be, it is said of Wellington, that when made acquainted with the loss of his troops, "his fortitude forsook him for a moment, and the glory of the victory yielded to the deep grief which the death of so many brave soldiers awakened in him." *

The English tarnished the laurels of that victory by horrible excesses. Unblushing rapacity, brutal drunkenness, unbridled lust, cruelty, murder, — the cries and groans of victims, the oaths of the executioner, the crash of houses falling under the fire which the spirit of vengeance had lighted, — the noise of musketry, which on that occasion disgraced those who kept it up; — such

* Napier.

during two days and two nights, was the spectacle which Badajoz presented. Even on the third day, though the town was thoroughly pillaged, and the soldiers were worn out with their own excesses, the utmost disorder continued to prevail at many points. Still, it was so far diminished that some efforts could be made to provide for the wounded and to bury the dead.

"The remonstrances of the officers," writes Count Toreno, "were unavailing; and even Lord Wellington saw himself threatened by the bayonets of his soldiers, who hindered him from entering the town to put a stop to the confusion."

This testimony of a Spanish historian, who takes no favourable view of the character of Wellington, may be accepted as an answer to the allegations of General Lamare, who says, "that Wellington refused to put a stop to the pillage, under the belief that he was justified by the laws of war in thus rewarding the bravery and devotion of his troops." The pillage, it is true, lasted three days, but this was in spite of the efforts of Wellington, who vainly strove to put a stop to it; and it has been justly remarked, "that there is little chance of saving the inhabitants from the fury of soldiers who pay no respect to their own officers."

The French engineers have severely criticised the operations of the siege of Badajoz, and attribute to fortune alone the success with which they were crowned. This judgment is too severe; nevertheless, Colonel Jones had allowed, long before they spoke out, that the plan of attack at Badajoz was hazardous and contrary to all rules. "It was never approved," he says, "even by those who formed and carried it into effect, but it was adopted as a matter of necessity, because

there were no means at hand wherewith to execute a better."

It is pretended, also, that the front of attack was not the weakest in the place. To this we reply, that the front 6—7 was the only one which could be battered from a distance, and approached without sapping; a consideration sufficient, in our opinion, to justify Wellington and the English engineers in having selected it. It is further assumed, that the assailants committed an error in engaging too many troops at the same time, which could only cause confusion in the assault. We do not understand how to reconcile this criticism with the following remark of Colonel Jones:— "The breaches would have been readily carried, could they have been properly assaulted by strong columns, closely followed up; but, in fact, no strong effort of that nature was made, and scarcely at any one time did more than fifty men ascend either breach in a compact body." To insure greater unity and order, two things ought to have been done. The counterscarp should have been beaten down, and the assault delivered by day; but there was neither time nor means to push the approaches up to the brink of the counterscarp; and it would have been impossible to send forward to the assault, in open day, columns which must have passed without cover over a considerable space under the still unsubdued fire of the enemy.

Finally, it is urged that the breaches were impregnable. With respect to that point, we may observe, that Major Jones, who, under Fletcher's orders, directed the works of attack, was of a different opinion when Wellington consulted him on the subject. Besides, at the period of the assault, there was no other choice than between

vigorous action — much more difficult, in truth, than Jones supposed it to be—and a retreat; the political consequences of which could not fail to prove disastrous to the English army. Wellington never hesitated, and he did right; by violating the rules of war he showed himself to be a great general. Moreover, it is not by the details of a siege that the commander of an army is to be judged; the management of these belongs to officers of engineers and artillery. Now, in regard to *matériel*, stores, tools, and means of transport, the Allies before Badajoz were in the most wretched condition; owing to the culpable negligence of the English Government, which did not then know how to carry on war.

Marshal Soult showed himself more just as well as more impartial, than his countrymen, when after the surrender of Badajoz he wrote: — "The proceedings of the English were, under the circumstances, so nicely calculated, that one might almost have supposed them to have intercepted a portion of the correspondence, which revealed to them the plan of operations of the army of Portugal, and the irresolution of the Duke of Ragusa." Another French author frankly admits, that it was as mortifying for the generals of his own nation, as it was glorious for the English leader, that an army of 50,000 men should have succeeded, by the ability and boldness of its manœuvres, in taking two places considered as the keys of Spain on the Portuguese side, in defiance of the protection of two French armies amounting, between them, to 80,000 combatants.

Shortly before the last assault, Philippon had sent off twenty men on horseback to inform Soult that the defence could not be continued much longer. They came

up with the marshal during the 8th, and comprehending the danger with which the place was menaced, he quitted his lines before Cadiz, and moved with 24,000 men in the direction of Llerena, while he left behind him, in Andalusia, troops barely sufficient to continue his great siege and to observe Grenada and Seville. Soult expected to find Marmont, as on the preceding year, with 30,000 men at Llerena. Instead of this, he was met by the intelligence that Badajoz, the possession of which opened to the English all the south of Spain, had fallen two days previously; and that the Duke of Ragusa, by order of the Emperor, was holding the provinces of the north. Besides this he discovered that his own communications with the important town of Seville, were seriously threatened by the armies of Ballasteros and Penne Villemur. This total change in the state of affairs induced him immediately to retrace his steps: besides he had no chance of beating the Allies, whose forces amounted to 45,000 men. Indeed his situation was become critical; for Wellington, without incurring serious risk, might push upon the Guadalquiver, capture Seville, destroy the arsenal of the army of Andalusia, and terminate in a short time a campaign which would deserve to be considered among the boldest and most glorious in history.

So fully satisfied was Soult of the speedy execution of this plan, that he took measures to fight the English army on its debouching from the Sierra Morena. The result, however, did not answer his expectations; for on the day after the capture of Badajoz Wellington wrote to Lord Liverpool: — "It would have been very desirable if I could have struck a severe blow at Marshal Soult before he could receive reinforcements; but on

the other hand, as the Spaniards have neglected to provision Ciudad Rodrigo (menaced by the Duke of Ragusa), it is absolutely necessary that I should return to the frontiers of Castile. Before placing Ciudad Rodrigo in a state of security, it will be quite impossible to enter Andalusia." The Spanish armies had adopted none of the measures agreed upon to interrupt the Duke of Ragusa's final march; Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo were destitute of provisions, and their fortifications, in defiance of the urgent orders of the commander-in-chief, had not even been repaired. This negligence entirely ruined Wellington's plan of defence for the north, and compelled him to retrace his steps in order to fight Marmont.

On the 18th of February, 1812, the Emperor, foreseeing that the Allies might operate against Badajoz, had written by Berthier to the Duke of Ragusa in these terms:—"Place your troops so that in four marches they may be able to assemble at Salamanca; if Wellington chooses to move towards Badajoz let him go; concentrate your army, and march straight upon Almeida. Push your parties upon Coimbra, and rest assured that Wellington will very soon come back to you; the English, however, are too knowing to commit such a fault. Write to the Duke of Dalmatia that he carry into effect the positive orders which I have given him, to move upon the Guadiana with 20,000 men, and force Hill, who at this moment has about 15,000, to remain on the banks of the Tagus. Do not think, M. le Maréchal, of going towards the south; but march at once into Portugal, if Wellington has committed the mistake of moving to the right bank of the Tagus."

This plan was well conceived, but to insure its suc-

cess there were required resources in cavalry, in provisions, and means of transport, which the Duke of Ragusa did not possess; and there was also required in the marshal himself a prompt and vigorous power of decision, of which he had given no proof since he entered Spain. Labouring under the conviction that Wellington would never think of acting on the offensive with means inadequate to produce a serious effect, he wasted precious time in discussing with Berthier the uselessness of an operation which, by-and-by, he undertook when the fitting moment had passed away. His conviction originated in a mistake, for the English general, whatever Marmont might say, was far from being easy about Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida. Indeed there is the best proof that he came to the determination of pressing the siege of Badajoz, as soon as intelligence reached him of the movement of the army of Portugal. Had the Duke of Ragusa conformed immediately to the instructions of the 18th of February, which he received towards the end of the same month, he might have arrived before Ciudad Rodrigo by the 15th of March at the latest; and a vigorous move on the offensive at that period would have probably induced Wellington to raise the siege of Badajoz altogether. Doubtless the English general was aware that the rivers had overflowed their banks, that the army of Portugal was destitute of siege equipment, and that its supplies were extremely limited; but on the other hand, it was by no means impossible, either to carry Almeida by storm, where would have been found *matériel* enough to form the siege of Rodrigo, or to reach Almaraz time enough to support Foy's division and raise the siege of Badajoz.

After long hesitation, the Duke of Ragusa set out,

carrying with him provisions for fifteen days. On the 31st of March his army reached the Agueda. Having vainly summoned Ciudad Rodrigo, he left behind him a corps of observation to mask that place and Almeida; and then advanced with the main body of his army, by Fuenteguinaldo, upon Alfayates, Sabugal, and Fandao. Here he learnt that twenty-three battalions of Portuguese militia, under the command of Sylveira, were posted upon the Guarda; and he marched against them with the 5th division and one brigade of the 4th. The militia retired as he approached, and went down the Mondego; but Marmont sent in pursuit the 13th Regiment of Chasseurs and 200 picked men of his own escort. Heavy rain having rendered firearms useless, the cavalry, under the orders of Colonel Denis, charged the Portuguese and put them to the rout, making 1500 prisoners. Five standards were taken, and upwards of 3000 stand of arms collected, which the fugitives had thrown away upon the field of battle.

These movements determined the enemy to set fire to considerable magazines which they had established at Castel Branco and Celerico. The latter might have fallen untouched into the hands of the French if Marmont had ordered a rapid pursuit after the affair of the Guarda; but whether at this time he received intelligence of the loss of Badajoz, or whether the want of provisions hindered him from proceeding further, or, finally, whether he conceived that he had sufficiently fulfilled the Emperor's intentions, he struck his camp on the 17th, and on the 25th re-entered Salamanca.

This retrograde movement was accomplished when Wellington arrived at Almeida. The expedition into Beira had failed to effect its main object, which was the

deliverance of Badajoz; but it compelled Wellington to abandon the advance which he meditated into Andalusia; a clear proof that if it had been better combined and more promptly executed, it would have completely succeeded, and possibly forced on a great battle, in which all the chances would have been in favour of the combined armies of Marmont and Soult.

In whatever point of view we examine this campaign, it bears ample testimony to the brilliant talents of the English general. No doubt fortune favoured him; but it is peculiar to men of genius to take advantage of circumstances, just as the skilful seaman knows how to turn to account the winds and currents which overwhelm unpractised mariners.

Sparing neither pains nor trouble to discover the exact situation of his adversaries, Wellington knew how to deal with each according to his system of warfare; and to proportion his own means to the exigencies of the moment. He despised the weak and disorganised army of the centre, deceived Marmont by the affectation of indolence, and anticipated Soult by the promptitude of his movements. Twice his able manœuvres determined the Duke of Ragusa to disperse his divisions when he ought to have kept them concentrated; and on each occasion the result was very advantageous to the Allies. The first time they took Ciudad Rodrigo, and the second they were able, without being disturbed, to disseminate their troops while marching through the Alentejo. The latter arrangement could not be avoided, because means of transport were wanting, and thus only could they provide themselves with food, and bring up the clothing which had been left behind.

Marmont, whose orders from the Emperor were to

secure the south and cover Madrid, exhibited neither activity nor determination; he committed the same faults which would have tarnished his reputation, whether the orders received from Paris had, or had not, largely contributed to the disasters of the campaign. His plan of sending three divisions to Soult, and of threatening Ciudad Rodrigo with three others, was undoubtedly less promising than that of Napoleon; yet it would have produced good results had he carried it promptly into execution, instead of slowly conforming to Berthier's orders. Such also was the opinion of Soult. "If Marmont," he says, "with a portion of his army, had made a few demonstrations towards Beira, and passed the Tagus, to unite himself with my troops, the siege of Badajoz might have been raised before the breach was practicable, and a great victory would have forced the English to re-enter their lines." This judgment is correct in part, but it takes its colouring too much from the mortification which the marshal experienced at the loss of the single trophy which had distinguished his campaign in Andalusia.

We have now arrived at a period in history when the decline of French power in Spain begins to be perceptible. His preparations for the campaign which he was about to open on the other side of the Niemen, obliged Napoleon to call thither the soldiers who, for four years back, had learned to understand Spain, the resources of the country, its broken ground, and the invincible obstinacy of its inhabitants. The corps of Imperial Guard, which lay at Valladolid and in Old Castile, received orders to return to France. The army of the north was broken up, and the other armies sus-

tained great loss by the recall of a portion of their battalions.

Obliged to guard an enormous extent of country, the French troops were weak upon every point, while the enemy, free to concentrate wherever he judged it expedient, marched everywhere and at all times in perfect security. These facts were not unknown to Napoleon, for the exasperated patriotism of the inhabitants of the Peninsula had opened his eyes, and the state of his armies, and the privations to which his soldiers were subjected, could not escape his observation. He resolved to concentrate all his forces upon the Ebro, till the campaign in Russia should come to an end. Indeed, the orders preparatory to this great movement were actually drawn up, but the surrender of Valencia, and the annihilation of Blake's army, composed of the *élite* of the Spanish troops, diverted the Emperor from a project the execution of which might have averted the day of the Arapiles, and ten months afterwards, the still more disastrous battle of Vittoria.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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